



# Illinois State Plan Field Operations Manual



Illinois Department of Labor  
Safety Inspection & Education Division

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## **Executive Summary**

This Field Operations Manual cancels and replaces any previous Illinois Department of Labor – Safety Inspection & Education Division (IDOL-SIED) Policy and Procedures manuals, which may be in effect. This program constitutes IDOL’s general enforcement policies and procedures manual for use by the Safety Inspection and Education Division in conducting inspections, issuing citations and proposing penalties.

## **Disclaimer**

**This manual is intended to provide instruction regarding some of the internal operations of the Illinois Department of Labor – Safety Inspection and Education Division, and is solely for the benefit of the Government. No duties, rights, or benefits, substantive or procedural, are created or implied by this manual. The contents of this manual are not enforceable by any person or entity against the Department of Labor or the state of Illinois.**

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## **APPENDICES**

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

### **I. Purpose.**

This Instruction implements the Illinois State Plan Field Operations Manual (IL FOM), and replaces any existing Safety Inspection and Education Division - Policy and Procedure Manual. This FOM is IDOL's enforcement policies and procedures. It is a reference document for identifying the responsibilities associated with the majority of their inspection duties.

### **II. Scope.**

This Instruction applies to the Illinois Department of Labor – Safety Inspection and Education Division (IDOL).

### **III. References and Guidance Documents.**

- A. [820 ILCS 220], Illinois Safety Inspection & Education Act
- B. [820 ILCS 225], Illinois Health & Safety Act
- C. 56 Ill. Admin Code Part 350, Health and Safety Administrative Rules
- D. 56 Ill. Admin Code Part 120, Administrative Hearings Rules
- E. [29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1910](#), Occupational Safety and Health Standards.
- F. [29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1926](#), Safety and Health Regulations for Construction.
- G. OSHA Instruction [ADM 03-01-005](#), OSHA Compliance Records, August 3, 1998.
- H. OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-00-028](#), Compliance Assistance the Powered Industrial Truck Operator Training Standards, November 30, 2000.
- I. OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-00-098](#), Guidelines for Case File Documentation for use with Videotapes and Audiotapes, October 12, 1993.
- J. OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-00-111](#), Citation Policy for Paperwork and Written Program Requirement Violations, November 27, 1995.

- K. OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-00-120](#), Inspection procedures for the Respiratory Protection Standard, September 25, 1998.
- L. OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-00-141](#), Inspection Scheduling for Construction, July 14, 2006.
- M. OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-02-035](#), 29 CFR 1910.95(b)(1), Guidelines for Noise Enforcement; Appendix A, December 19, 1983.
- N. OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-02-038](#), Inspection Procedures for the Hazard Communication Standard, March 20, 1998.
- O. OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-02-054](#), Respiratory Protection Program Guidelines, July 14, 2000.
- P. OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-02-073](#), Inspection Procedures for 29 CFR 1910.120 and 1926.65, Paragraph (q): Emergency Response to Hazardous Substance Releases, August 27, 2007.
- Q. OSHA Instruction [CPL 04-00-001](#), Procedures for Approval of Local Emphasis Programs (LEPs), November 10, 1999.
- R. OSHA Instruction [CSP 01-00-002](#), State Plan Policies and Procedures Manual, March 21, 2001.
- S. OSHA Instruction [CSP 02-00-002](#), Consultation Policies and Procedures Manual, January 18, 2008.
- T. OSHA Instruction [CSP 03-01-003](#), Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) Policies and Procedures Manual, April 18, 2008.
- U. OSHA Instruction [CSP 03-02-002](#), OSHA Strategic Partnership Program for Worker Safety and Health, February 10, 2005.
- V. OSHA Instruction [CSP 04-01-001](#), OSHA Alliance Program, June 10, 2004.



#### **IV. Background.**

The Federal Field Inspection Reference Manual (FIRM) was issued September 26, 1994 and while not formally adopted was used as a reference document for IDOL inspections. Any additional directives, memorandums, and interpretations were used as guidance documents for IDOL as well.

This document, the IDOL Field Operations Manual, incorporates and replaces the FIRM and many of the subsequent directives and memoranda, and provides a single, updated source of instruction on general IDOL enforcement policies and procedures similar to OSHA's.

The FOM is designed to be updated on a regular basis by amending chapters or sections thereof to embody modifications and clarifications to IDOL's general enforcement policies and procedures.

#### **V. Definitions and Terminology.**

**A. Act (s).**

This term refers to the Safety Inspection and Education Act [20 ILCS 220] and/or the Health and Safety Act [820 ILCS 225].

**B. Inspector.**

This term refers to Public Safety Inspectors, and Industrial Hygienists.

**C. He/She and His/Hers.**

The terms *he* and *she*, as well as *his* or *her*, when used throughout this manual, are interchangeable. That is, male(s) applies to female(s), and vice versa.

**D. Professional Judgment.**

All IDOL employees are expected to exercise their best judgment as safety and health professionals and as representatives of the state of Illinois in every aspect of carrying out their duties.

**E. Workplace and Worksite.**

The terms *workplace* and *worksite* are interchangeable. *Workplace* is used more frequently in general industry, while *worksite* is more commonly used in the construction industry.

## **Chapter 2**

### **PROGRAM PLANNING**

#### **I. Introduction.**

IDOL's mission is to assure the safety and health of Illinois' public sector working men and women by promulgating and enforcing standards and regulations; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health as well as the development of comprehensive safety and health management systems. Effective and efficient use of resources requires careful, flexible planning. In this way, the overall goal of hazard abatement and employee protection is best served.

#### **II. Office Responsibilities.**

##### **A. Providing Assistance.**

1. Small agencies may need special assistance in understanding and complying with the regulations.
2. The Illinois State Plan program must contain procedures to answer inquiries by small entities. This program provides information on and advice about compliance with the statutes and regulations; interpretations; and applications of the law to specific sets of facts supplied by the small entity.

##### **B. Outreach Program.**

The Division Manager or designee will ensure that each office maintains an outreach program appropriate to local conditions and the needs of the service area. The plan may include support services, compliance assistance services including assistance in developing compliance safety and health management systems, training and education services, referral services, cooperative programs, abatement assistance, and technical services.

##### **C. Responding to Requests for Assistance.**

All requests from employers or employees for compliance information or assistance shall receive timely, accurate, and helpful responses from IDOL. See the section on [Information Requests](#) in this chapter for additional information.

### **III. IDOL Cooperative Programs Overview.**

IDOL offers a number of avenues for businesses and organizations to work cooperatively with the Department. Inspectors should discuss the various cooperative programs with employers.

#### **A. Voluntary Protection Program (VPP).**

IDOL does not currently have a Voluntary Protection Program but will establish a similar program that will be administered by the Consultation Program. This will be available to larger employers with exemplary safety and health programs. This section is reserved at this time.

#### **B. Onsite Consultation Program.**

1. OSHA onsite consultation programs are available in all 50 states as well as the District of Columbia, Guam, Northern Marianas Islands, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands under [Section 21\(d\)](#) and [23\(g\)](#) agreements with Federal OSHA or under State plans approved by OSHA.
  - a. The State Onsite Consultation Program offers a variety of services at no cost to employers. These services include assisting in the development and implementation of an effective safety and health management system, and offering training and education to the employer and employees at the worksite. Smaller businesses in high hazard industries or those involved in hazardous operations receive priority.
  - b. The State Onsite Consultation Program is separate from OSHA's enforcement efforts. Under onsite consultation programs, no citations are issued, nor are penalties proposed.
2. **Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP).**
  - a. Another program that recognizes employers' efforts to create a safe workplace and exempts them from programmed inspections is the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP). This program is administered by the State Onsite Consultation Program but is funded under [Section 21\(d\)](#) of the Act.
  - b. SHARP is designed to provide incentives and support those employers that implement and continuously improve effective safety and health management system(s) at their worksite.

SHARP participants are exempted from OSHA programmed inspections.

**C. Strategic Partnerships**

[RESERVED]

**D. Alliance Program.**

[RESERVED]

**IV. Enforcement Program Scheduling.**

**A. General.**

1. IDOL's priority system for conducting inspections is designed to allocate available resources as effectively as possible to ensure that maximum feasible protection is provided to working men and women. The Division Manager or designee will ensure that inspections are scheduled within the framework of this chapter, that they are consistent with the objectives of the Department, and that appropriate documentation of scheduling practices is maintained.
2. The Division Manager or designee will also ensure that IDOL resources are effectively distributed during inspection activities. If an inspection is of a complex nature, the Division Manager or designee may consider utilizing additional IDOL resources. In other circumstances, the use of outside resources may aid in deploying available resources more effectively. The Division will retain control of the inspection.

**B. Inspection Priority Criteria.**

Generally, priority of accomplishment and of assigning staff resources for inspection categories is as shown in Table 2-1 below:

**Table 2-1: Inspection Priorities**

PRIORITY	CATEGORY
First	Imminent Danger
Second	Fatality/Catastrophe
Third	Complaints/Referrals
Fourth	Programmed Inspections

1. **Efficient Use of Resources.**

Deviations from this priority list are allowed so long as they are justifiable, lead to the efficient use of resources, and promote effective employee protection. An example of such a deviation would be when the Division Manager commits a certain percentage of resources to programmed Special Emphasis Program (SEP) inspections such as adopting a National Emphasis Program (NEP), a Local Emphasis Program (LEP), or Regional Emphasis Program (REP). Inspection scheduling deviations must be documented in the case file.

2. **Follow-up Inspections.**

In cases where follow-up inspections are necessary, they shall be conducted as promptly as resources permit. In general, follow-up inspections shall take priority over all programmed inspections and any unprogrammed inspection in which the hazards are anticipated to be other-than-serious.

*NOTE: See [Chapter 7](#), Post-Citation Procedures and Abatement Verification, for additional information.*

3. **Monitoring Inspections.**

When a monitoring inspection is necessary, the priority is the same as for a follow-up inspection.

*NOTE: See [Chapter 7](#), Post-Citation Procedures and Abatement Verification, for additional information.*

4. **Employer Information Requests.**

Contacts for technical information initiated by employers or their representatives will not trigger an inspection, nor will such employer inquiries protect the requesting employer against inspections conducted pursuant to existing policy, scheduling guidelines and inspection programs established by the Division.

5. **Reporting of Imminent Danger, Catastrophe, Fatality, Amputations, Accidents, Referrals or Complaints.**

The Division Manager or designee will act in accordance with established inspection priority procedures. All fatalities will be processed in the main office along with appropriate notifications.

*NOTE: See [Section V](#) of this chapter, Unprogrammed Activity – Hazard Evaluation and Inspection Scheduling, for additional information.*

**C. Effect of Contest.**

If an employer has contested a citation and/or a penalty from a previous inspection at a specific worksite, and the case is still pending, the following guidelines apply to additional inspections of the employer at that worksite:

1. If the employer has contested the penalty only, the inspection will be scheduled as if there were no contest;
2. If the employer has contested the citation itself or any items therein, then programmed and unprogrammed inspections will be scheduled, but all under contest will be excluded from the inspection unless a potential imminent danger is involved.

*NOTE: See Inspection Priority Criteria, of this chapter for additional information.*

**D. Preemption by another Agency.**

1. Section 2 of the Health and Safety Act states that the Act does not apply to working conditions of employees with respect to which Federal agencies, and State agencies acting under Section 274 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended [42 USC 2021] exercise statutory authority to prescribe or enforce standards or regulations affecting occupational safety and health.
2. At times, an inspection may have already begun when the coverage jurisdiction question arises. Any such situation will be brought to the attention of the Division Manager or designee as soon as they arise, and dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

**E. Home-Based Worksites.**

1. The Department will not perform any inspections of employees' home offices. A home office is defined as office work activities in a home-based setting/worksite (e.g., filing, keyboarding, computer research, reading, writing) and may include the use of office equipment (e.g., telephone, facsimile machine, computer, scanner, copy machine, desk, file cabinet).
2. IDOL will only conduct inspections of other home-based worksites when it receives a complaint or referral alleging that a violation of

a safety or health standard exists that threatens physical harm, that an imminent danger is present, or that there was a work-related fatality.

**F. Inspection/Investigation Types.**

**1. Unprogrammed.**

a. Inspections scheduled in response to alleged hazardous working conditions identified at a specific worksite are classified as unprogrammed. This type of inspection is classified as:

- Imminent Dangers;
- Fatalities/catastrophes;
- Complaints; and
- Referrals.

b. It also includes follow-up and monitoring inspections scheduled by the Enforcement Assistant Manager(s).

*NOTE: This category includes all employers/employees directly affected by the subject of the unprogrammed inspection activity.*

**2. Unprogrammed Related.**

a. Inspections of employers at multi-employer worksites whose operations are not directly addressed by the subject of the conditions identified in a complaint, accident, or referral are designated as unprogrammed related.

b. An example would be: A trenching inspection conducted at the unprogrammed worksite where the trenching hazard was not identified in the complaint, accident report, or referral.

**3. Programmed.**

Inspections of worksite which have been scheduled based upon objective or neutral selection criteria are programmed inspections. The worksites are selected according to scheduling plans for safety and health under a local, regional or national emphasis program.

4. **Program Related.**

Inspections of employers at multi-employer worksites whose activities were not included in the programmed assignment.

V. **Unprogrammed Activity – Hazard Evaluation and Inspection Scheduling.**

Enforcement procedures relating to unprogrammed activity are located in subject specific chapters of this manual:

- ▶ Imminent Danger, see, *Imminent Danger, Fatality, Catastrophe, and Emergency Response.*
- ▶ Fatality/Catastrophe, see, *Imminent Danger, Fatality, Catastrophe, and Emergency Response.*
- ▶ Emergency Response, see, *Imminent Danger, Fatality, Catastrophe, and Emergency Response.*
- ▶ Complaint/Referral Processing, see, *Complaint and Referral Processing.*
- ▶ Whistleblower Complaints, see, *Complaint and Referral Processing..*
- ▶ Follow-ups and Monitoring, see, *Post-Citation Procedures and Abatement Verification.*

VI. **Programmed Inspections.**

A. **Programmed Planned Inspections.**

There is no comprehensive listing of establishments that are in the public sector constituency that IDOL regulates. Therefore in order to establish a database, a random selection of incorporated/listed Cities and Counties are selected on a six-month timeframe and assigned based upon territorial assignments.

**For example:** If the City of Dogwood was selected, the inspector who is assigned the county that Dogwood is in will conduct a comprehensive inspection of every public establishment in that city.

**Another example:** If the County of Dog is selected, then the inspector who is assigned that county will conduct a comprehensive inspection of every state and county establishment in that county.

B. **Site-Specific Targeting (SST) Program.**



IDOL will eventually adopt a similar program to the OSHA Site-Specific Targeting (SST) program which directs enforcement resources to those worksites where the highest rate of injuries and illness has occurred. IDOL currently lacks the statistical data to establish a similar program at this developmental stage. Therefore the programmed targeting is scheduled for all sites in the public sector in order to establish a solid database.

**C. Scheduling for Construction Inspections.**

Due to the mobility of the construction industry, the transitory nature of construction worksites, and the fact that construction worksites frequently involve more than one employer, inspections are scheduled from the applicable publicly-funded contract list. The Illinois Capital Development Board maintains a list of construction projects from identified or known covered active projects. Projects are selected in accordance with the inspection schedule for construction but are not a significant portion of the constituent projects for the Illinois State Plan program.

**D. Scheduling for Maritime Inspections.**

[Reserved].

**E. Special Emphasis Programs (SEPs).**

Special Emphasis Programs provide for programmed inspections of establishments in industries with potentially high injury or illness rates that are not covered by other programmed inspection scheduling systems or, if covered, where the potentially high injury or illness rates are not addressed to the extent considered adequate under the specific circumstances. SEPs are also based on potential exposure to health hazards. Special emphasis programs may also be used to develop and implement alternative scheduling procedures or other departures from national procedures. Special emphasis programs can include State-wide, Regional or Local Emphasis Programs.

**1. Identification of Special Emphasis Programs.**

The description of the particular Special Emphasis Program shall be identified by one or more of the following:

- a. Specific industry;
- b. Trade/craft;
- c. Substance or other hazard;

- d. Type of workplace operation;
- e. Type/kind of equipment; and
- f. Other identifying characteristic.

2. **Special Emphasis Program Scope.**

The reasons for and the scope of a Special Emphasis Program shall be described; and may be limited by geographic boundaries, size of worksite, or similar considerations.

3. **Pilot Programs.**

National or local pilot programs may also be established under Special Emphasis Programs. Such programs may be conducted for the purpose of assessing the actual extent of suspected or potential hazards, determining the feasibility of new or experimental compliance procedures, or for any other legitimate reason.

F. **National Emphasis and Local Emphasis Programs (NEP/LEP).**

OSHA develops National Emphasis Programs to focus outreach efforts and inspections on specific hazards in a workplace.

LEPs are types of special emphasis program in which one or more Area Offices of a Region participate. LEPs are generally based on knowledge of local industry hazards or local industry injury/illness experience. LEPs must be developed and approved when one or more Area Offices within a Region target inspections to a specific industry(ies), hazard(s), or other workplace characteristic(s), e.g., as part of, or in conjunction with, a local initiative or problem-solving project.

*NOTE: See [CPL 04-00-001](#), Procedures for Approval of Local Emphasis Programs (LEPs), dated November 10, 1999, for additional information.*

G. **Inspection Scheduling and Interface with Cooperative Program Participants.**

- 1. Employers who participate in voluntary compliance programs may be exempt from programmed inspections and eligible for inspection deferrals or other enforcement incentives. The Division Manager or designee will determine whether the employer is actively participating in a Cooperative Program that would impact inspection and enforcement activity at the worksite being

considered for inspection. Where possible, this determination should be made prior to scheduling the inspection.

2. Information regarding a facility's participation in the following programs should be available prior to scheduling inspection activity:

- a. SHARP Participants;

3. **Consultation.**

- a. **Consultation Visit in Progress.**

- If an on-site consultation visit is in progress, it will take priority over IDOL programmed inspections. An on-site consultation visit will be considered "in progress" in relation to the working conditions, hazards, or situations covered by the visit from the beginning of the opening conference through the end of the correction due dates and any extensions thereof. If an on-site consultation visit is already in progress it will terminate when the following kind of IDOL compliance inspection is about to take place:
  - Imminent danger inspection;
  - Fatality/catastrophe inspection;
  - Complaint inspections; and/or
  - Other critical inspections, as determined by the Division Manager.

*NOTE: Other "such critical inspections" may include, but are not limited to, referrals as defined in Complaint and Referral Processing. Following an evaluation of the hazards alleged in a referral, if the Division Manager determines that enforcement action is required prior to the end of an abatement period established by the consultation project, the consultation visit in progress shall be immediately terminated to allow for an enforcement inspection.*

- For purposes of efficiency and expediency, an employer's worksite shall not be subject to concurrent consultation and enforcement-related visits.

- **Full Service On-Site Consultation Visits.**

While a worksite is undergoing a full service on-site consultation visit for safety **and** health; programmed enforcement activity may not occur until after the end of the worksite's visit "In Progress" status.

- **Full Service Safety or Health On-Site Consultation Visits.**

An on-site consultation visit "in Progress" is discipline-related, whether for safety **or** health; programmed enforcement activity may not proceed until after the end of the worksite's visit "In Progress" status, and is limited to the discipline examined, safety or health.

- **Limited Service On-Site Consultation Visits.**

If a worksite is undergoing a limited service on-site consultation visit, whether focused on a particular type of work process or a hazard; programmed enforcement activity may not proceed while the consultant is at the worksite. The re-scheduled enforcement activity must be limited only to those areas that were not addressed by the scope of the consultative visit (posted List of Hazards).

- **Enforcement Follow-Up and Monitoring Inspections.**

If an enforcement follow-up or monitoring inspection is scheduled while a worksite is undergoing an on-site consultation visit, the inspection shall not be deferred; however, its scope shall be limited only to those areas required to be covered by the follow-up or monitoring inspection. In such instances, the consultant must halt the on-site visit until the enforcement inspection is completed. In the event IDOL issues a citation(s) as a result of the

follow-up or monitoring inspection, an on-site consultation visit may not proceed until the citation(s) becomes final.

**b. On-Site Consultation and 90-Day Deferral.**

- If an establishment has requested an initial full-service comprehensive consultation visit for safety and health from the Consultation Program, and that visit has been scheduled, the programmed planned inspection may be deferred for 90 calendar days from the date of the notification by the Consultation Program to the Division Manager. No extension of the deferral beyond the 90 calendar days is possible, unless the consultation visit is “In Progress.”
- IDOL may, however, in exercising its authority to schedule inspections, assign a lower priority to worksites where consultation visits are scheduled.

*NOTE: See [CSP 02-00-002](#), Consultation Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 7: Relationship to Enforcement, dated January 18, 2008, for additional information.*

**4. Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP).**

SHARP is designed to provide support and incentives to those public employers that implement and continuously improve effective safety and health management system(s) at their worksite. SHARP participants are exempted from programmed inspections. [29 CFR 1908.7(b)(4)]

**a. Duration of SHARP Status.**

All initial approvals of SHARP status will be for a period of up to two years, commencing with the date the Regional Office approves an employer’s SHARP application. After the initial approval, all SHARP renewals will be for a period of up to three years.

**b. IDOL Inspection(s) at SHARP Worksites.**

As noted above, employers that meet all the requirements for SHARP status will have the names of their establishments deleted from IDOL's Programmed Inspection Schedule. However, the following types of incidents can trigger an IDOL enforcement inspection at SHARP sites: imminent danger; fatality/catastrophe; or formal complaints. [29 CFR 1908.7(b)(4)(ii)]

*NOTE: See [CSP 02-00-002](#), Consultation Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 8: OSHA's Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) and Pre-SHARP, dated January 18, 2008, for additional information.*

5. **Strategic Partnership Program (SP).**

a. **[RESERVED]**

6. **Alliances.**

**[RESERVED]**

## **Chapter 3**

### **INSPECTION PROCEDURES**

#### **I. Inspection Preparation.**

The conduct of effective inspections requires judgment in the identification, evaluation, and documentation of safety and health conditions and practices. Inspections may vary considerably in scope and detail depending on the circumstances of each case.

#### **II. Inspection Planning.**

It is important that the inspector adequately prepare for each inspection. Due to the wide variety of industries and associated hazards likely to be encountered, pre-inspection preparation is essential to the conduct of a quality inspection.

##### **A. Review of Inspection History.**

Inspectors will carefully review data available for information relevant to the establishment scheduled for inspection. This may include inspection files and source reference material relevant to the industry. Inspectors will also conduct/request an establishment search of the databases that have archival inspection information. The establishment search should use name variations and address-matching to maximize their efforts due to possible variations in names and status (i.e., City of Decatur Public Works, Decatur Public Works).

##### **B. Review of Consultation Program Participation.**

Inspectors will access the various inspection archive databases to obtain information about employers who are currently participating in cooperative programs. Inspectors will verify whether the employer is a current program participant during the opening conference. Inspectors will be mindful of whether they are preparing for a programmed or unprogrammed inspection, as this may affect whether the inspection should be conducted and/or its scope.

##### **C. Safety and Health Issues Relating to Inspectors.**

###### **1. Hazard Assessment.**

If the employer has a written certification that a hazard assessment has been performed pursuant to [§1910.132\(d\)](#), the inspector shall request a copy. If the hazard assessment itself is not in writing, the inspector shall ask the person who signed the certification to

describe all potential workplace hazards and then select appropriate protective equipment. If there is no hazard assessment, the inspector will determine potential hazards from sources such as the 300 Log of injuries and illnesses and shall select personal protective equipment accordingly.

## **2. Respiratory Protection.**

Inspectors must wear respirators when and where required, and must care for and maintain respirators in accordance with the respiratory protection training provided.

- a. Inspectors should conduct a pre-inspection evaluation for potential exposure to chemicals. Prior to entering any hazardous areas, the inspector should identify those work areas, processes, or tasks that require respiratory protection. The hazard assessment requirement in [§1910.132\(d\)](#) does not apply to respirators; see [CPL 02-02-054, Respiratory Protection Program Guidelines](#), dated July 14, 2000. Inspectors should review all pertinent information contained in the establishment file and appropriate reference sources to become knowledgeable about the industrial processes and potential respiratory hazards that may be encountered. During the opening conference, a list of hazardous substances should be obtained or identified, along with any air monitoring results. Inspectors should determine if they have the appropriate respirator to protect against chemicals present at the work site.
- b. Inspectors must notify their supervisor or the respiratory protection program administrator:
  - If a respirator no longer fits well (Inspectors should request a replacement that fits properly);
  - If inspectors encounter any respiratory hazards during inspections or on-site visits that they believe have not been previously or adequately addressed during the site visit; or
  - If there are any other concerns regarding the program.

## **3. Safety and Health Rules and Practices.**

Inspectors must comply with all safety and health rules and practices at the establishment and wear or use the safety clothing or protective equipment required by IDOL-OSHA standards or by the employer for the protection of employees.



4. **Restrictions.**

Inspectors will not enter any area where special entrance restrictions apply until the required precautions have been taken. It shall be the Enforcement Assistant Manager's responsibility to determine that an inspection may be conducted without exposing the inspector to hazardous situations and to procure whatever materials and equipment are needed for the safe conduct of the inspection.

D. **Advance Notice.**

1. **Policy.**

- a. Section 2.6 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act contains a prohibition against the giving of advance notice of inspections, except as authorized by the Director or the Director's designee.

b. **Advance Notice Exceptions.**

There may be occasions when advance notice is necessary to conduct an effective investigation. These occasions are narrow exceptions to the statutory prohibition against advance notice. Advance notice of inspections may be given only with the authorization of the Division Manager or designee and only in the following situations:

- In cases of apparent imminent danger to enable the employer to correct the danger as quickly as possible;
- When the inspection can most effectively be conducted after regular business hours or when special preparations are necessary (i.e., Correctional Institutions, Mental Health Centers);
- To ensure the presence of employer and employee representatives or other appropriate personnel who are needed to aid in the inspection; and
- When giving advance notice would enhance the probability of an effective and thorough inspection; e.g., in complex fatality investigations.

c. **Delays.**

Advance notice exists whenever a specific date or time is set-up with the employer for the inspector to begin an inspection. Any delays in the conduct of the inspection shall be kept to an absolute minimum. Lengthy or unreasonable delays shall be brought to the attention of the Division Manager or designee.

In unusual circumstances, the Division Manager or designee may decide that a delay is necessary. In those cases the employer or the inspector shall notify affected employee representatives, if any, of the delay and shall keep them informed of the status of the inspection.

**2. Documentation.**

The conditions requiring advance notice and the procedures followed shall be documented in the case file.

**E. Pre-Inspection Compulsory Process.**

1. Section 2(b)(2) of the Safety Inspection & Education Act authorizes the Department to seek a warrant in advance of an attempted inspection if circumstances are such that pre-inspection process is desirable or necessary. Section 11 of the Health & Safety Act authorizes the Department to issue administrative subpoenas to obtain relevant information.
2. Although the Department generally does not seek warrants without evidence that the employer is likely to refuse entry, the Division Manager or designee may seek compulsory process in advance of an attempt to inspect or investigate whenever circumstances indicate the desirability of such warrants.

*NOTE: Examples of such circumstances include evidence of denied entry in previous inspections, or awareness that a job will only last a short time or that job processes will be changing rapidly.*

3. Administrative subpoenas may also be issued prior to any attempt to contact the employer or other person for evidence related to an IDOL inspection or investigation. See *Legal Issues*.

**F. Personal Security Clearance.**

Some establishments have areas that contain material or processes that are classified as high security. Whenever an inspection is scheduled for an establishment containing classified areas, the Division Manager or designee shall assign an inspector who has the appropriate security clearances. The Division Manager shall ensure that an adequate number

of inspectors with appropriate security clearances are available and that the security clearances are current.

**G. Expert Assistance.**

1. The Division Manager or designee shall arrange for a specialist and/or specialized training, preferably from within IDOL, to assist in an inspection or investigation when the need for such expertise is identified.
2. IDOL specialists may accompany inspectors or perform their tasks separately. Inspectors must accompany outside consultants. IDOL specialists and outside consultants shall be briefed on the purpose of the inspection and personal protective equipment to be utilized.

**III. Inspection Scope.**

Inspections, either programmed or unprogrammed, fall into one of two categories depending on the scope of the inspection:

**A. Comprehensive.**

A comprehensive inspection is a substantially complete and thorough inspection of all potentially hazardous areas of the establishment. An inspection may be deemed comprehensive even though, as a result of professional judgment, not all potentially hazardous conditions or practices within those areas are inspected.

**B. Partial.**

A partial inspection is one whose focus is limited to certain potentially hazardous areas, operations, conditions or practices at the establishment.

1. A partial inspection may be expanded based on information gathered by the inspector during the inspection process consistent with the Act(s) and IDOL priorities.
2. Inspectors shall use pre-determined criteria from their offices to determine the necessity for expanding the scope of an inspection, based on information gathered during records or program review and walk-around inspection.

**IV. Conduct of Inspection.**

**A. Time of Inspection.**

1. Inspections shall be made during regular working hours of the establishment except when special circumstances indicate otherwise.
2. The Enforcement Assistant Manager or designee and the inspector shall determine if alternate work schedules are necessary regarding entry into an inspection site during other than normal working hours.

**B. Presenting Credentials.**

1. Inspectors are to present their credentials whenever they make contact with management representatives, employees (to conduct interviews), or organized labor representatives while conducting their inspections.
2. At the beginning of the inspection, the inspector shall identify themselves to the operator, supervisor, or agent in charge of the place of employment and present credential signed by the Director to verify their identity.
3. When neither the person in charge nor a management official is present, contact may be made with the employer to request the presence of the owner, operator or management official. The inspection shall not be delayed unreasonably to await the arrival of the employer representative. This delay should normally not exceed one hour. On occasions when the inspector is waiting for the employer representative, the workforce may begin to leave the jobsite. In this situation the inspector should contact their supervisor or designee for guidance. If the person in charge at the workplace cannot be determined, record the extent of the inquiry in the case file and proceed with the physical inspection.

**C. Refusal to Permit Inspection and Interference.**

Section 2 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act provides that inspectors may enter without delay and at reasonable times any establishment covered under the Act(s) for the purpose of conducting an inspection. Unless the circumstances constitute a recognized exception to the warrant requirement (i.e., consent, third party consent, plain view, open field, or exigent circumstances) an employer has a right to require that the inspector seek an inspection warrant prior to entering an establishment and may refuse entry without such a warrant.

1. **Refusal of Entry or Inspection.**

- a. When the employer refuses to permit entry upon being presented proper credentials, or allows entry but then refuses to permit or hinders the inspection in some way, an attempt shall be made to obtain as much information as possible about the establishment. See *Legal Issues*, for additional information.
- b. If the employer refuses to allow an inspection of the establishment to proceed, the inspector shall leave the premises and immediately report the refusal to the Division Manager or designee.
- c. If the employer raises no objection to inspection of certain portions of the workplace but objects to inspection of other portions, this shall be documented. Normally, the inspector shall continue the inspection, confining it only to those certain portions to which the employer has raised no objections.
- d. In either case, the inspector shall advise the employer that the refusal will be reported to the Division Manager or designee and that the agency may take further action, which may include obtaining legal process.
- e. On multi-employer worksites, valid consent can be granted by the owner, or another employer with employees at the worksite, for site entry.

2. **Employer Interference.**

Where entry has been allowed but the employer interferes with or limits any important aspect of the inspection, the inspector shall determine whether or not to consider this action as a refusal. Examples of interference are refusals to permit the walk-around, the examination of records essential to the inspection, the taking of essential photographs and/or videotapes, the inspection of a particular part of the premises, private employee interviews, or the refusal to allow attachment of sampling devices.

3. **Forcible Interference with Conduct of Inspection or Other Office Duties.**

Whenever an IDOL employee or inspector encounters forcible resistance, opposition, interference, etc., or is assaulted or threatened with assault while engaged in the performance of official duties, all investigative activity shall cease.

- a. If an inspector is assaulted while attempting to conduct an inspection, they shall contact the proper authorities or local police and immediately notify the Division Manager.
- b. Upon receiving a report of such forcible interference, the Enforcement Assistant Manager or designee shall immediately notify the Division Manager.
- c. If working at an offsite location, inspectors should leave the site immediately pending further instructions from the Division Manager or designee.

4. **Obtaining Compulsory Process.**

If it is determined, upon refusal of entry or refusal to produce evidence required by subpoena, that a warrant will be sought, the Division Manager shall proceed according to guidelines and procedures established for warrant applications. See *Legal Issues*.

D. **Employee Participation.**

Inspectors shall advise employers of the Act and require that an employee representative be given an opportunity to participate in the inspection.

1. Inspectors shall determine as soon as possible after arrival whether the employees at the inspected worksite are represented and, if so, shall ensure that employee representatives are afforded the opportunity to participate in all phases of the inspection.
2. If an employer resists or interferes with participation by employee representatives in an inspection and the interference cannot be resolved by the inspector, the resistance shall be construed as a refusal to permit the inspection and the Division Manager or designee shall be contacted.

E. **Release for Entry.**

1. Inspectors shall not sign any form or release or agree to any waiver. This includes any employer forms concerned with trade secret information.
2. Inspectors may obtain a pass or sign a visitor's register, or any other book or form used by the establishment to control the entry and movement of persons upon its premises. Such signature shall not constitute any form of a release or waiver of prosecution of liability under the Act(s).

**F. Out of Business or No Longer Public Sector Establishment.**

1. If the establishment scheduled for inspection is found to have ceased business and there is no known successor, the inspector shall report the facts to the Division Manager or designee. This includes operations that may have been taken over by the private sector (i.e., nursing homes, hospitals).

**G. Employee Responsibilities.**

1. Section 3(e) of the Health & Safety Act states: "It shall be the duty of every employee to comply with such rules as are promulgated from time to time by the Director pursuant to this Act or the Safety Inspection & Education Act, which are applicable to his own actions and conduct." The Act does not provide for the issuance of citations or the proposal of penalties against employees. Employers are responsible for employee compliance with the standards.
2. In cases where inspectors determine that employees are systematically refusing to comply with a standard applicable to their own action and conduct, the matter shall be referred to the Enforcement Assistant Manager who shall consult with the Division Manager.
3. Under no circumstances are inspectors to become involved in an on-site dispute involving labor-management issues or interpretation of collective-bargaining agreements. Inspectors are expected to obtain sufficient information to assess whether the employer is using its authority to ensure employee compliance with the Act(s). Concerted refusals to comply by employees will not bar the issuance of a citation if the employer has failed to exercise its control to the maximum extent reasonable, including discipline and discharge.

**H. Strike or Labor Dispute.**

Establishments may be inspected regardless of the existence of labor disputes, such as work stoppages, strikes or picketing. If the inspector identifies an unanticipated labor dispute at a proposed inspection site, the Division Manager or designee shall be consulted before any contact is made.

1. **Programmed Inspections.**

Programmed inspections may be deferred during a strike or labor dispute, either between a recognized union and the employer or between two unions competing for bargaining rights in the establishment.

**2. Unprogrammed Inspections.**

- a. Unprogrammed inspections (complaints, fatalities, referrals, etc.) will be performed during strikes or labor disputes. However, the credibility and veracity of any complaint shall be thoroughly assessed by the Division Manager or designee prior to scheduling an inspection.
- b. If there is a picket line at the establishment, inspectors shall attempt to locate and inform the appropriate union official of the reason for the inspection prior to initiating the inspection.
- c. During the inspection, inspectors will make every effort to ensure that their actions are not interpreted as supporting either party to the labor dispute.

**I. Variances.**

The employer's requirement to comply with a standard may be modified through granting of a variance, as outlined in Section 4.2 of the Health and Safety Act.

1. An employer will not be subject to citation if the observed condition is in compliance with an existing variance issued to that employer.
2. In the event that an employer is not in compliance with the requirement(s) of the issued variance, a violation of the applicable standard shall be cited with a reference in the citation to the variance provision that has not been met.

**V. Opening Conference.**

**A. General.**

Inspectors shall attempt to inform all affected employers of the purpose of the inspection, provide a copy of the complaint if applicable, and include any employee representatives, unless the employer objects. The opening conference should be brief so that the compliance officer may quickly proceed to the walk-around. Conditions of the worksite shall be noted upon arrival, as well as any changes that may occur during the opening conference. At the start of the opening conference, inspectors will provide



both the employer and the employee representative(s) copies of their rights during the inspection, including the opportunity to participate in the physical inspection of the workplace.

Inspectors shall request a copy of the written certification that a hazard assessment has been performed by the employer in accordance with [§1910.132\(d\)](#). Inspectors should then ask the person who signed the certification about any potential worksite exposures and select appropriate personal protective equipment.

**1. Attendance at Opening Conference.**

- a. Inspectors shall conduct a joint opening conference with employer and employee representatives unless either party objects.
- b. If there is objection to a joint conference, the inspector shall conduct separate conferences with employer and employee representatives.

**2. Scope of Inspection.**

Inspectors shall outline in general terms the scope of the inspection, including the need for private employee interviews, physical inspection of the workplace and records, possible referrals, rights during an inspection, discrimination complaints, and the closing conference(s).

**3. Video/Audio Recording.**

Inspectors shall inform participants that a video camera and/or an audio recorder may be used to provide a visual and/or audio record, and that the videotape and audiotape may be used in the same manner as handwritten notes and photographs in inspections.

*NOTE: If an employer clearly refuses to allow videotaping during an inspection, inspectors shall contact the Enforcement Assistant Manager to determine if videotaping is critical to documenting the case. If it is, this may be treated as a denial of entry.*

**4. Immediate Abatement.**

Inspectors should explain to employers the advantages of immediate abatement, including that there are no certification requirements for violations quickly corrected during the inspection. See *Post-Inspection Procedures and Abatement Verification*.

5. **Abbreviated Opening Conference.**

An abbreviated opening conference shall be conducted whenever the inspector believes that circumstances at the worksite dictate the walk-around begin as promptly as possible.

- a. In such cases, the opening conference shall be limited to presenting credentials, purpose of the visit, an explanation of rights, and a request for employer and employee representatives. All other elements shall be fully addressed in the closing conference.
- b. The employer and the employee representatives shall be informed of the opportunity to participate in the physical inspection of the workplace.

6. **Recordkeeping Rule**

- a. The recordkeeping rules state that once a request is made, an employer must provide the required recordkeeping records within four (4) business hours.
- b. Although the employer has four hours to provide injury and illness records, the compliance officer is not required to wait until the records are provided before beginning the walkaround portion of the inspection. As soon as the opening conference is completed the compliance officer is to begin the walkaround portion of the inspection.

B. **Review of Appropriation Act Exemptions and Limitation.**

Inspectors shall determine if the employer is covered by any exemptions or limitations noted in the current Appropriations Act. See [CPL 02-00-051](#), *Enforcement Exemptions and Limitations under the Appropriations Act*, dated May 28, 1998.

C. **Review Screening for Process Safety Management (PSM) Coverage.**

Inspectors shall request a list of the chemicals on site and their respective maximum intended inventories. Inspectors shall review the list of chemicals and quantities, and determine if there are highly hazardous chemicals listed in [§1910.119, Appendix A](#) or flammable liquids or gases at or above the specified threshold quantity. Inspectors may ask questions, conduct interviews, or a walk-around to confirm the information on the list of chemicals and maximum intended inventories.

1. If there is an highly hazardous chemical present at or above threshold quantities, inspectors shall determine if any exemptions apply:
  - a. Inspectors shall confirm that the facility is not a retail facility, oil or gas well drilling or servicing operation, or normally unoccupied remote facility ([§1910.119\(a\)\(2\)](#)). If the facility is one of these types of establishments, PSM does not apply.
  - b. If management believes that the process is exempt, Inspectors shall ask the employer to provide documentation or other information to support that claim.
2. According to [§1910.119 \(a\)\(1\)\(ii\)](#), a process could be exempt if the employer can demonstrate that the covered chemical(s) are:
  - a. Hydrocarbon fuels used solely for workplace consumption as a fuel (e.g., propane used for comfort heating, gasoline for vehicle refueling), if such fuels are not a part of a process containing another highly hazardous chemical covered by the standard, or
  - b. Flammable liquids stored in atmospheric tanks or transferred, which are kept below their normal boiling point without the benefit of chilling or refrigeration.

**D. Review of Voluntary Compliance Programs.**

Employers who participate in selected voluntary compliance programs may be exempted from programmed inspections. Inspectors shall determine whether the employer falls under such an exemption during the opening conference.

**1. On-Site Consultation Visits.**

- a. Inspectors shall ascertain at the opening conference whether an OSHA-funded consultation visit is in progress. A consultation visit in progress extends from the beginning of the opening conference to the end of the correction due dates (including extensions).
- b. An on-site consultation visit in progress has priority over programmed inspections except for imminent danger investigations, fatality/catastrophe investigations, complaint investigations, and other critical inspections as determined by

the Division Manager.

2. **Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP)**

- a. Upon verifying that the employer is a current participant, the inspector shall notify the Enforcement Assistant Manager or designee so that the establishment can be removed from the State Programmed Inspection Schedule for the approved exemption period, which begins on the date the Regional Office approves the employer's participation in SHARP.
- b. The initial exemption period is up to two years. The renewal exemption period is up to three years, based on the recommendation of the Consultation Project Manager.

3. **Voluntary Protection Program (VPP).** [RESERVED]

E. **Disruptive Conduct.**

Inspectors may deny the right of accompaniment to any person whose conduct interferes with a full and orderly inspection. If disruption or interference occurs, the inspector shall contact the Enforcement Assistant Manager or designee as to whether to suspend the walk-around or take other action. The employee representative shall be advised that during the inspection matters unrelated to the inspection shall not be discussed with employees.

F. **Classified Areas.**

In areas containing information classified by an agency of the State of Illinois in the interest of security, only persons authorized to have access to such information may accompany an inspector on the inspection.

**VI. Review of Records.**

A. **Injury and Illness Records.**

1. **Collection of Data.**

- a. At the start of each inspection, the inspector shall review the employer's injury and illness records for three prior calendar years, record the information on a copy of the OSHA-300 screen, and enter the employer's data into the database.

This shall be done for all general industry, construction, and maritime inspections and investigations.

- b. Inspectors shall use these data to calculate the Days Away, Restricted, or Transferred (DART) rate and to observe trends, potential hazards, types of operations and work-related injuries

2. **Information to be Obtained.**

- a. Inspectors shall request copies of the OSHA-300 Logs of Injuries and Illnesses, the total hours worked and the average number of employees for each year, and a roster of current employees.
- b. If inspectors have questions regarding a specific case on the log, they shall request the OSHA-301 Incident Report Form or equivalent form for that case.
- c. Inspectors shall check if the establishment has an on-site medical facility and/or the location of the nearest emergency room where employees may be treated.

*NOTE: The total hours worked and the average number of employees for each year can be found on the OSHA-300A Summary of Injuries and Illnesses for all past years.*

3. **Automatic DART Rate Calculation.**

Inspectors will not normally need to calculate the Days Away, Restricted, or Transferred (DART) rate since it is automatically calculated when the OSHA-300 data is entered. If one of the three years is a partial year, so indicate and the software will calculate accordingly.

4. **Manual DART Rate Calculation.**

If it is necessary to calculate rates manually, the inspector will calculate the DART Rates on-site using the following procedures. The DART rate includes cases involving days away from work, restricted work activity, and transfers to another job.

The formula is:

$(N/EH) \times (200,000)$  where:

- $N$  is the number of cases involving days away and/or restricted work activity and job transfers.
- $EH$  is the total number of hours worked by all employees during the calendar year; and
- $200,000$  is the base number of hours worked for 100 full-time equivalent employees.

**EXAMPLE 3-1:** Employees of an establishment (XYZ Company), including management, temporary and leased workers, worked 645,089 hours at XYZ company. There were 22 injury and illness cases involving days away and/or restricted work activity and/or job transfer from the OSHA-300 Log (total of column H plus column I). The DART rate would be  $(22 \div 645,089) \times (200,000) = 6.8$ .

5. **Construction.**

For construction inspections/investigations, only the OSHA-300 information for the public sector portion need be recorded where such records exist and are maintained. It will be left to the discretion of the Division Manager or the inspector as to whether Injury and Illness data should also be recorded for any of the subcontractors.

B. **Recording Criteria.**

Employers must record new work-related injuries and illnesses that meet one or more of the general recording criteria or meet the recording criteria for specific types of conditions.

1. Death;
2. Days Away from Work;
3. Restricted Work.
4. Transfer to another job;
5. Medical treatment beyond first aid;
6. Loss of consciousness;
7. Diagnosis of a significant injury or illness; or
8. Meet the recording criteria for Specific Cases noted in Subpart B of the Health and Safety Administrative Rules.

C. **Recordkeeping Deficiencies.**

1. If there is evidence that the deficiencies or inaccuracies in the employer's records impairs the ability to assess hazards, injuries

and/or illnesses at the workplace, a comprehensive records review shall be performed and assistance requested from the Division Manager.

2. Other information related to this topic:
  - a. See [CPL 02-00-135](#), *Recordkeeping Policies and Procedures Manual*, dated September 3, 2004, and [CPL 02-02-072](#), *Rules of Agency Practice and Procedure concerning OSHA Access to Employee Medical Records for Policy Regarding Review of Medical and Exposure Records*, dated August 22, 2007.
  - b. Other OSHA-IDOL programs and records will be reviewed including hazard communication, lockout/tagout, emergency evacuation and personal protective equipment. Additional programs will be reviewed as applicable.
  - c. Many standard-specific directives provide additional instruction to inspectors requesting certain records and/or documents at the opening conference.

## **VII. Walk-around Inspection.**

The main purpose of the walk-around inspection is to identify potential safety and/or health hazards in the workplace. Inspectors shall conduct the inspection in such a manner as to avoid unnecessary personal exposure to hazards and to minimize unavoidable personal exposure to the extent possible.

### **A. Walk-around Representatives. [820 ILCS 220/2(b)]**

Persons designated to accompany the inspector during the walk-around are considered walk-around representatives, and will generally include those designated by the employer and employee. At establishments where more than one employer is present or in situations where groups of employees have different representatives, it is acceptable to have a different employer/employee representative for different phases of the inspection. More than one employer and/or employee representative may accompany the inspector throughout or during any phase of an inspection if the inspector determines that such additional representatives will aid, and not interfere with, the inspection. .

#### **1. Employees Represented by a Certified or Recognized Bargaining Agent.**

During the opening conference, the highest ranking union official or union employee representative on-site shall designate who will participate in the walk-around. The inspector has the authority to resolve all disputes as to whom is the representative authorized by

the employer and employees. If in the judgment of the inspector, good cause has been shown why accompaniment by a third party who is not an employee of the employer (such as an industrial hygienist or a safety engineer) is reasonably necessary to the conduct of an effective and thorough physical inspection of the workplace, such third party may accompany the inspector during the inspection.

2. **No Certified or Recognized Bargaining Agent.**

Where employees are not represented by an authorized representative, there is no established safety committee, or employees have not chosen or agreed to an employee representative for inspection purposes (regardless of the existence of a safety committee), inspectors shall determine if other employees would suitably represent the interests of employees on the walk-around. If selection of such an employee is impractical, inspectors shall conduct interviews with a reasonable number of employees during the walk-around.

3. **Safety Committee.**

Employee members of an established safety committee or employees at large may designate an employee representative for inspection purposes,

B. **Evaluation of Safety and Health System.**

The employer's safety and health system shall be evaluated to determine its good faith.

C. **Record All Facts Pertinent to a Violation.**

1. Safety and health violations shall be brought to the attention of employer and employee representatives at the time they are documented.
2. Inspectors shall record, at a minimum, the identity of the exposed employee(s), the hazard to which the employee(s) was exposed, the employee's proximity to the hazard, the employer's knowledge of the condition, and the manner in which important measurements were obtained and how long the condition has existed.
3. Inspectors will document interview statements in a thorough and accurate manner; including names, dates, times, locations, type of materials, positions of pertinent articles, witnesses, etc.



*NOTE: If employee exposure to hazards is not observed, the inspector shall document facts on which the determination is made that an employee has been or could be exposed. See Violations and Case File Preparation and Documentation.*

**D. Testifying in Hearings.**

Inspectors may be required to testify in hearings on IDOL's behalf, and shall be mindful of this fact when recording observations during inspections. The case file shall reflect conditions observed in the workplace as accurately and detailed as possible.

**E. Trade Secrets.**

A trade secret includes information concerning or related to processes, operations, style of work, or apparatus, or to the identity, confidential statistical data, amount or source of any income, profits, losses, or expenditures of any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or association.

**1. Policy.**

It is essential to the effective enforcement of the Act(s) that inspectors and IDOL personnel preserve the confidentiality of all information and investigations which might reveal a trade secret.

**2. Restriction and Controls.**

When the employer identifies an operation or condition as a trade secret, it shall be treated as such. Information obtained in such areas, including all negatives, photographs, videotapes, and documentation forms, shall be labeled:

"ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION"  
"RESTRICTED TRADE INFORMATION"

- a. All information reported to or obtained by inspectors in connection with any inspection or other activity which contains or which might reveal a trade secret shall be kept confidential. Such information shall not be disclosed except to other IDOL officials concerned with the enforcement of the Act(s) or, when relevant, in any proceeding under the Act(s).
- b. Trade secret materials shall not be labeled as "Top Secret," "Secret," or "Confidential," nor shall these security classification designations be used in conjunction with other

words unless the trade secrets are also classified by an agency of the government in the interest of security.

3. If the employer objects to the taking of photographs and/or videotapes because trade secrets would or may be disclosed, inspectors should advise the employer of the protection against such disclosure. If the employer still objects, inspectors shall contact the Division Manager or designee.

**F. Collecting Samples.**

1. Inspectors shall determine early in the inspection whether sampling such as, but not limited to, air sampling and surface sampling is required, by utilizing the information collected during the walk-around and from the pre-inspection review.
2. Summaries of the results shall be provided on request to the appropriate employees, including those exposed or likely to be exposed to a hazard, employer representatives and employee representatives.

**G. Photographs and Videotapes.**

1. Photographs and/or videotapes, whether digital or otherwise, shall be taken whenever the inspector determines there is a need.
  - a. Photographs that support violations shall be properly labeled, and may be attached to the appropriate violation worksheet.
  - b. The inspector shall ensure that any photographs relating to confidential or trade secret information are identified as such and are kept separate from other evidence.
2. All film and photographs or videotape shall be retained in the case file. If lack of storage space does not permit retaining the film, photographs or videotapes with the file, they may be stored elsewhere with a reference to the corresponding inspection. Videotapes shall be properly labeled. For more information regarding guidelines for case file documentation with video, audio and digital media, see OSHA Instruction [CPL 02-00-098](#), *Guidelines for Case File Documentation for Use with Videotapes and Audiotapes*, dated October 12, 1993, and any other directives related to photograph and videotape retention.

**H. Violations of Other Laws.**

If an inspector observes apparent violations of laws enforced by other government agencies, such cases shall be referred to the appropriate agency. Referrals shall be made using appropriate Division procedures.

## **I. Interviews of Non-Managerial Employees.**

A free and open exchange of information between the inspector and employees is essential to an effective inspection. Interviews provide an opportunity for employees to supply valuable factual information concerning hazardous conditions, including information on how long workplace conditions have existed, the number and extent of employee exposure(s) to a hazardous condition, and the actions of management regarding correction of a hazardous condition.

### **1. Background.**

- a. Inspectors have the right to question **any employee privately** during regular working hours or at other reasonable times during the course of an inspection. The purpose of such interviews is to obtain whatever information the inspector deems necessary or useful in carrying out inspections effectively.
- b. Employee interviews are an effective means to determine if an advance notice of inspection has adversely affected the inspection conditions, as well as to obtain information regarding the employer's knowledge of the workplace conditions or work practices in effect prior to, and at the time of, the inspection. During interviews with employees, the inspector should ask about these matters.
- c. The inspector should also obtain information concerning the presence and/or implementation of a safety and health system to prevent or control workplace hazards.
- d. If an employee refuses to be interviewed, the inspector shall use professional judgment, in consultation with the Division Manager or designee, in determining the need for the statement.

### **2. Employee Right of Complaint.**

The inspector may consult with any employee who desires to discuss a potential violation. Upon receipt of such information, the inspector shall investigate the alleged hazard, where possible, and record the findings.

3. **Time and Location of Interview.**

Inspectors are authorized to conduct interviews during regular working hours and at other reasonable times, and in a reasonable manner at the workplace. Interviews often occur during the walk-around, but may be conducted at any time during an inspection. If necessary, interviews may be conducted at locations other than the workplace. The inspector should consult with the Enforcement Assistant Manager if an interview is to be conducted someplace other than the workplace. Where appropriate, IDOL has the authority to subpoena an employee to appear for an interview.

4. **Conducting Interviews of Non-Managerial Employees in Private.**

The inspector shall inform employers that interviews of non-managerial employees will be conducted in private. Inspectors are entitled to question such employees in private regardless of employer preference. If an employer interferes with a inspector's ability to do so, the inspector should request that their Supervisor who may consult with the Legal Division to determine appropriate legal action. Interference with an inspector's ability to conduct private interviews with non-managerial employees includes, but is not limited to, attempts by management officials or representatives to be present during interviews.

5. **Conducting Employee Interviews.**

a. **General Protocols.**

- At the beginning of the interview the inspector should identify themselves to the employee by showing their credentials, and provide the employee with a business card. This allows employees to contact the inspector if they have further information at a later time.
- The inspector should explain to employees that the reason for the interview is to gather factual information relevant to a safety and health inspection. It is not appropriate to assume that employees already know or understand the Division's purpose. Particular sensitivity is required when interviewing a non-English speaking employee. In such instances, the inspector should initially determine whether the employee's comprehension of English is sufficient to permit conducting an effective interview. If an interpreter is

needed, the inspector should contact the state or Agency's tele-interpreter.

- Every employee should be asked to provide his or her name, home address and phone number. The inspector should request identification and make clear the reason for asking for this information.
- The inspector shall inform employees that IDOL has the right to interview them in private and of the protections afforded under Section 2.2 the Whistleblower Discrimination section of the Safety Inspection & Education Act.
- In the event an employee requests that a representative of the union be present, the inspector shall make a reasonable effort to honor the request.
- If an employee requests that his/her personal attorney be present during the interview, the inspector should honor the request and, before continuing with the interview, consult with the Enforcement Assistant Manager for guidance.
- Rarely, an attorney for the employer may claim that individual employees have also authorized the attorney to represent them. Such a situation creates a potential conflict of interest. The inspector should ask the affected employees whether they have agreed to be represented by the attorney. If the employees indicate that they have, the inspector should consult with the Division Manager who will contact the Legal Division.

**b. Interview Statements.**

Interview statements of employees or other persons shall be obtained whenever the inspector determines that such statements would be useful in documenting potential violations. Interviews shall normally be reduced to writing and written in the first person in the language of the individual. Employees shall be encouraged to sign and date the statement.

- Any changes or corrections to the statement shall be initialed by the individual. Statements shall not otherwise be changed or altered in any manner.

- Statements shall include the words, “I request that my statement be held confidential to the extent allowed by law” and end with the following; “I have read the above, and it is true to the best of my knowledge.”
- If the person making the declaration refuses to sign, the inspector shall note the refusal on the statement. The statement shall, nevertheless, be read back to the person in an attempt to obtain agreement and noted in the case file.
- A transcription of any recorded statement shall be made when necessary to the case.
- Upon request, if a management employee requests a copy of his/her interview statement, one shall be given to them.

c. **The Informant Privilege.**

- The informant privilege allows the government to withhold the **identity** of individuals who provide information about the violation of laws, including IDOL rules and regulations. The inspector shall inform employees that their statements will remain confidential to the extent permitted by law. However, each employee giving a statement should be informed that disclosure of his or her identity may be necessary in connection with enforcement or court actions.

*NOTE: Whenever an inspector makes an assurance of confidentiality as part of an investigation (i.e. informs the person giving the statement that their identity will be protected), the pledge shall be reduced to writing and included in the case file.*

- The privilege also protects the contents of statements to the extent that disclosure may reveal the witness’s identity. Where the contents of a statement will not disclose the identity of the informant (i.e., does not reveal the witness’ job title, work area, job duties, or other information that would tend to reveal the individual’s identity), the privilege does not apply. Interviewed employees shall be told that they are under no legal obligation to inform anyone, including employers, that they provided information to IDOL.

Interviewed employees shall also be informed that if they voluntarily disclose such information to others, it may impair the agency's ability to invoke the privilege.

**J. Multi-Employer Worksites.**

On multi-employer worksites (in all industry sectors), more than one employer may be cited for a hazardous condition that violates a standard. A two-step process must be followed in determining whether more than one employer is to be cited. See [CPL 02-00-124](#), *Multi-Employer Citation Policy*, dated December 10, 1999, for further guidance.

**K. Administrative Subpoena.**

Whenever there is a reasonable need for records, documents, testimony and/or other supporting evidence necessary for completing an inspection scheduled in accordance with any current and approved inspection scheduling system or an investigation of any matter properly falling within the statutory authority of the agency, the Division Manager may issue an administrative subpoena. *See Legal Issues.*

**L. Employer Abatement Assistance.**

**1. Policy.**

The inspectors shall offer appropriate abatement assistance during the walk-around as to how workplace hazards might be eliminated. The information shall provide guidance to the employer in developing acceptable abatement methods or in seeking appropriate professional assistance. The inspector shall not imply IDOL endorsement of any product through use of specific product names when recommending abatement measures. The issuance of citations shall not be delayed.

**2. Disclaimers.**

The employer shall be informed that:

- a. The employer is not limited to the abatement methods suggested by IDOL;
- b. The methods explained are general and may not be effective in all cases; and
- c. The employer is responsible for selecting and carrying out an effective abatement method, and maintaining the appropriate documentation.

## **VIII. Closing Conference.**

### **A. Participants.**

At the conclusion of an inspection, the inspector shall conduct a closing conference with the employer and the employee representatives, jointly or separately, as circumstances dictate. The closing conference may be conducted on-site or by telephone as the inspector deems appropriate. If the employer refuses to allow a closing conference, the circumstances of the refusal shall be documented in the case file narrative and the case shall be processed as if a closing conference had been held.

*NOTE: When conducting separate closing conferences for employers and labor representatives (where the employer has declined to have a joint closing conference with employee representatives), the inspector shall normally hold the conference with employee representatives first, unless the employee representative requests otherwise. This procedure will ensure that worker input is received before employers are informed of violations and proposed citations.*

### **B. Discussion Items.**

1. The inspector shall discuss the apparent violations and other pertinent issues found during the inspection and note relevant comments on the violation worksheet, including input for establishing correction dates.
2. The inspector shall briefly discuss the employer rights and responsibilities following an inspection and answer any questions. All matters discussed during the closing conference shall be documented in the case file, including a note describing any materials distributed.
3. The inspector shall discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the employer's occupational safety and health system and any other applicable programs, and advise the employer of the benefits of an effective program(s) and provide information describing program elements.
4. Both the employer and employee representatives shall be advised of their rights to participate in any subsequent conferences, meeting or discussions, and their contest rights. Any unusual circumstances noted during the closing conference shall be documented in the case file.



5. Since the inspector may not have all pertinent information at the time of the first closing conference, a second closing conference may be held by telephone or in person.
6. The inspector shall advise employee representatives that:
  - a. If an employer contests a citation, the employees have a right to elect “party status” under 56 Ill. Admin Code Part 120.220, before the Administrative Law Judge;
  - b. The employer should notify them if a notice of contest or a petition for modification of abatement date is filed;
  - c. They have Whistleblower Discrimination Protection rights as outlined in Section 2.2 of the Safety Inspection & Education Act; and
  - d. They have a right to contest the abatement date. Such contests must be in writing and must be postmarked within 15 working days after receipt of the citation.

**C. Advice to Attendees.**

1. The inspector shall advise those attending the closing conference that a request for an informal conference with the Division Manager is encouraged as it provides an opportunity to:
  - a. Resolve disputed citations and penalties without the need for litigation which can be time consuming and costly;
  - b. Obtain a more complete understanding of the specific safety or health standards which apply;
  - c. Discuss ways to correct the violations;
  - d. Discuss issues concerning proposed penalties;
  - e. Discuss proposed abatement dates;
  - f. Discuss issues regarding employee safety and health practices; and
  - g. Learn more of other IDOL programs and services available.

2. If a citation is issued, an informal conference or the request for one does not extend the 15 working-day period in which the employer or employee representatives may contest.
3. Verbal disagreement with, or intent to, contest a citation, penalty or abatement date during an informal conference does not replace the required written Notice of Intent to Contest.
4. Employee representatives have the right to participate in informal conferences or negotiations between the Division Manager and the employer in accordance with the guidelines given in the *Informal Conferences* section.

**D. Penalties.**

The inspector shall explain that penalties, if issued, must be paid within 15 working days after the employer receives a citation and notification of penalty. If, however, an employer contests the citation and/or the penalty, penalties need not be paid for the contested items until the final rule date.

**E. Feasible Administrative, Work Practice and Engineering Controls.**

Where appropriate, the inspector will discuss control methodology with the employer during the closing conference.

**1. Definitions.**

*a. Engineering Controls.*

Consist of substitution, isolation, ventilation and equipment modification.

*b. Administrative Controls.*

Any procedure which significantly limits daily exposure by control or manipulation of the work schedule or manner in which work is performed is considered a means of administrative control. The use of personal protective equipment is not considered a means of administrative control.

*c. Work Practice Controls.*

A type of administrative controls by which the employer modifies the manner in which the employee performs assigned work. Such modification may result in a reduction of exposure through such methods as changing work habits, improving

sanitation and hygiene practices, or making other changes in the way the employee performs the job.

d. *Feasibility.*

Abatement measures required to correct a citation item are feasible when they can be accomplished by the employer. The inspector, following current directions and guidelines, shall inform the employer, where appropriate, that a determination will be made as to whether engineering or administrative controls are feasible.

e. *Technical Feasibility.*

The existence of technical know-how as to materials and methods available or adaptable to specific circumstances, which can be applied to a cited violation with a reasonable possibility that employee exposure to occupational hazards will be reduced.

f. *Economic Feasibility.*

Means that the employer is financially able to undertake the measures necessary to abate the citations received.

*NOTE: If an employer's level of compliance lags significantly behind that of its industry, allegations of economic infeasibility will not be accepted.*

2. **Documenting Claims of Infeasibility.**

- a. The inspector shall document the underlying facts which give rise to an employer's claim of infeasibility.
- b. When economic infeasibility is claimed, the inspector shall inform the employer that, although the cost of corrective measures to be taken will generally not be considered as a factor in the issuance of a citation, it may be considered during an informal conference or during settlement negotiations.
- c. Complex issues regarding feasibility should be referred to the Enforcement Assistant Manager or designee for determination.

F. **Reducing Employee Exposure.**

Employers shall be advised that, whenever feasible, engineering, administrative or work practice controls must be instituted, even if they are not sufficient to eliminate the hazard (or to reduce exposure to or below the permissible exposure limit). They are required in conjunction with personal protective equipment to further reduce exposure to the lowest practical level.

**G. Abatement Verification.**

During the closing conference the inspector should thoroughly explain to the employer the abatement verification requirements. See *Post Inspection Procedures and Abatement Verification* chapter.

**1. Abatement Certification.**

Abatement certification is required for all citation item(s) which the employer received except for those citation items which are identified as “Corrected During Inspection.”

**2. Corrected During Inspection (CDI).**

The violation(s) that will reflect on-site abatement and will be identified in the citations as “Corrected During Inspection” shall be reviewed at the closing conference.

**3. Abatement Documentation.**

Abatement documentation, the employer’s physical proof of abatement, is required to be submitted along with each willful, repeat and designated serious violation. To minimize confusion, the distinction between abatement certification and abatement documentation should be discussed.

**4. Placement of Abatement Verification Tags.**

The required placement of abatement verification tags or the citation must also be discussed at the closing conference, if it has not been discussed during the walk-around portion of the inspection.

**5. Requirements for Extended Abatement Periods.**

Where extended abatement periods are involved, the requirements for abatement plans and progress reports shall be discussed.

**H. Employee Discrimination.**

The inspector shall emphasize that the Act(s) prohibit employers from discharging or discriminating in any way against an employee who has exercised any right under the Act(s), including the right to make safety or health complaints or to request an IDOL inspection.

## **IX. Special Inspection Procedures.**

### **A. Follow-up and Monitoring Inspections.**

1. The primary purpose of a follow-up inspection is to determine if the previously cited violations have been corrected. Monitoring inspections are conducted to ensure that hazards are being abated and employees protected, whenever a long period of time is needed for an establishment to come into compliance (or to verify compliance with the terms of granted variances). Issuance of willful, repeated and high gravity serious violations, failure to abate notifications, and/or citations related to imminent danger situations are examples of prime candidates for follow-up or monitoring inspections. These types of inspections will not normally be conducted when evidence of abatement is provided by the employer or employee representatives.

#### **2. Failure to Abate.**

- a. A failure to abate exists when a previously cited violation continues unabated and the abatement date has passed or the abatement date is covered under a settlement agreement, or the employer has not complied with interim measures within the allotted time specified in a long-term abatement plan.
- b. If previously cited items have not been corrected, a Notice of Failure to Abate Alleged Violation shall normally be issued. If a subsequent inspection indicates the condition has still not been abated, the Division Manager will consult the Legal Division for further guidance.

*NOTE: If the employer has demonstrated a good faith effort to comply, a late Petition for Modification of Abatement (PMA) may be considered. See Petition for Modification of Abatement section.*

- c. If an originally cited violation has at one point been abated but subsequently recurs, a citation for a repeated violation may be appropriate.

#### **3. Reports.**

- a. For any items found to be abated, a copy of the previous violation worksheets or citation can be notated with "corrected" written on it, along with a brief explanation of the abatement measures taken,. This information may alternately be included in the narrative of the investigative file.
- b. In the event that any item has not been abated, complete documentation shall be included on the violation worksheet.

4. **Follow-up Files.**

Follow-up inspection reports shall be included with the original (parent) case file.

B. **Construction Inspections.**

1. **Standards Applicability.**

The standards published as [29 CFR Part 1926](#) have been adopted as occupational safety and health standards under Subpart C of the Illinois Administrative Rules, Part 350. They shall apply to every employment and place of employment of every employee engaged in construction work, including non-contract construction.

2. **Definition.**

The term "construction work" as defined by §1926.32(g) means work for construction, alteration, and/or repair, including painting and decorating. These terms are also discussed in §1926.13. If any question arises as to whether an activity is deemed to be construction for purposes of the Act(s), the Division Manager shall be consulted.

3. **Employer Worksite.**

- a. The worksite is generally the site where the construction is being performed (e.g., the building site, the dam site). Where the construction site extends over a large geographical area (e.g., road building), the entire job will be considered a single worksite.
- b. When a construction worksite extends beyond an inspector's normal assigned counties and the inspector believes that the inspection should be extended, the affected Enforcement

Assistant Managers shall consult with each other and take appropriate action.

4. **Upon Entering the Workplace.**

- a. The inspector shall ascertain whether there is a representative of a State contracting agency (i.e., Capital Development Board) at the worksite. If so, they shall contact the representative, advise him/her of the inspection and request that they attend the opening conference.
- b. If the inspection is being conducted as a result of a complaint, a copy of the complaint is to be furnished to the affected public sector employers.

5. **Closing Conference.**

Upon completion of the inspection, the inspector shall confer with the general contractors and all appropriate subcontractors or their representatives, together or separately, and advise each one of all the apparent violations disclosed by the inspection to which each one's employees were exposed, or violations which the employer created or controlled. Employee representatives participating in the inspection shall also be afforded the right to participate in the closing conference(s).

## Chapter 4

### VIOLATIONS

#### I. Basis of Violations.

##### A. Standards and Regulations.

1. The Act(s) state that each employer has a responsibility to comply with occupational safety and health standards promulgated under the Act(s), which includes standards incorporated by reference. For example, the American National Standard Institute (ANSI) standard A92.2 – 1969, “Vehicle Mounted Elevating and Rotating Work Platforms,” including appendix, is incorporated by reference as specified in [§1910.67](#). Only the mandatory provisions, i.e., those containing the word “shall” or other mandatory language of standards incorporated by reference, are adopted as standards under the Act(s).
2. The specific standards and regulations adopted and enforced by IDOL are found in Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1900 series. Subparts A and B of 29 CFR 1910 specifically establish the source of all the standards, which serve as the basis of violations. Standards are subdivided as follows per the preferred Federal Register nomenclature:

Subdivision Naming Convention	Example
Title	29
Part	1910
Section	305
Paragraph	(j)
Subparagraph	(6)
Item	(ii)
Subitem	(A)
Subitem 2	(2)

*NOTE: The most specific provision of a standard shall be used for citing violations.*

#### 3. Definition and Application of Vertical and Horizontal Standards.

Vertical standards are standards that apply to a particular industry or to particular operations, practices, conditions, processes, means,



methods, equipment, or installations. Horizontal standards are other (more general) standards applicable to multiple industries. .

#### 4. **Application of Horizontal and Vertical Standards.**

If an inspector is uncertain whether to cite under a horizontal or a vertical standard when both may be applicable, the supervisor or the Division Manager shall be consulted. The following guidelines shall be considered:

- a. When a hazard in a particular industry is covered by both a vertical (e.g., [29 CFR 1915](#)) and a horizontal (e.g., [29 CFR 1910](#)) standard, the vertical standard shall take precedence even if the horizontal standard is more stringent.
- b. In situations covered by both a horizontal (general) and a vertical (specific) standard where the horizontal standard appears to offer greater protection, the horizontal (general) standard may be cited only if its requirements are not inconsistent or in conflict with the requirements of the vertical (specific) standard. To determine whether there is a conflict or inconsistency between the standards, an analysis of the intent of the two standards must be performed. For the horizontal standard to apply, the analysis must show that the vertical standard does not address the precise hazard involved, even though it may address related or similar hazards.

**EXAMPLE 4-1:** When employees are connecting structural steel, [§1926.501\(b\)\(15\)](#) may not be cited for fall hazards above 6 feet since that specific situation is covered by [§1926.760\(b\)\(1\)](#) for fall distances of more than 30 feet.

- c. If the particular industry does not have a vertical standard that covers the hazard, then the inspector shall use the horizontal (general industry) standard.
- d. When determining whether a horizontal or a vertical standard is applicable to a work situation, the inspector shall focus attention on the particular activity an employer is engaged in rather than on the nature of the employer's general business.
- e. Hazards found in construction work that are not covered by a specific [29 CFR 1926](#) standard shall not normally be cited under [29 CFR 1910](#) unless that standard has been identified as being applicable to construction.

- f. If a question arises as to whether an activity is deemed construction for purposes of the Act(s), contact the Division Manager. See [§1910.12](#), Construction Work.

**5. Violation of Variances.**

The employer's requirement to comply with a standard may be modified through granting of a variance, as outlined in Section 4.2 of the Health and Safety Act.

- a. In the event that the employer is not in compliance with the requirements of the variance, a violation of the controlling standard shall be cited with a reference in the citation to the variance provision that has not been met.
- b. If, during an inspection, the inspector discovers that an employer has filed a variance application regarding a condition that is an apparent violation of a standard, the Division Manager or designee shall determine whether the variance request has been granted. If the variance has not been granted, a citation for the condition may be issued.

**B. Employee Exposure.**

A hazardous condition that violates an IDOL-OSHA standard or the general duty clause shall be cited only when employee exposure can be documented. The exposure(s) must have occurred within the six months immediately preceding the issuance of the citation to serve as a basis for a violation, except where the employer has concealed the violative condition or misled IDOL, in which case the citation must be issued within six months from the date when IDOL learns, or should have known, of the condition.

**1. Determination of Employer/Employee Relationship.**

Whether or not exposed persons are employees of a particular employer depends on several factors, the most important of which is who controls the manner in which employees perform their assigned work. The question of who pays these employees may not be the key factor. Determining the employer of exposed employees may be a complex issue, in which case the Division Manager shall seek the advice of the Legal Division.

**2. Proximity to the Hazard.**

The actual and/or potential proximity of the employees to a hazard shall be thoroughly documented. (i.e., photos, measurements, employee interviews).

3. **Observed Exposure.**

- a. Employee exposure is established if the inspector witnesses, observes, or monitors the proximity or access of an employee to the hazard or potentially hazardous condition.
- b. The use of personal protective equipment may not, in itself, adequately prevent employee exposures to a hazardous condition. Such exposures may be cited where the applicable standard requires the additional use of engineering and/or administrative (including work practice) controls, or where the personal protective equipment used is inadequate.

4. **Unobserved Exposure.**

Where employee exposure is not observed, witnessed, or monitored by an inspector, the employee exposure may be established through witness statements or other evidence that exposure to a hazardous condition has occurred or may continue to occur.

a. **Past Exposure.**

In fatality/catastrophe (or other “accident/incident”) investigations, prior employee exposure(s) may be established if an inspector establishes, through written statements or other evidence, that exposure(s) to a hazardous condition occurred at the time of the accident/incident. Additionally, prior exposures may serve as the basis for a violation when:

- The hazardous condition continues to exist, or it is reasonably predictable that the same or similar condition could recur;
- It is reasonably predictable that employee exposure to a hazardous condition could recur when:
  - The employee exposure has occurred in the previous six months;
  - The hazardous condition is an integral part of an employer's normal operations; and

- The employer has not established a policy or program to ensure that exposure to the hazardous condition will not recur.

**b. Potential Exposure.**

Potential exposure to a hazardous condition may be established if there is evidence that employees have access to the hazard, and may include one or more of the following:

- When a hazard has existed and could recur because of work patterns, circumstances, or anticipated work requirements;
- When a hazard would pose a danger to employees simply by their presence in an area and it is reasonably predictable that they could come into that area during the course of the work, to rest or to eat, or to enter or exit from an assigned work area; or
- When a hazard is associated with the use of unsafe machinery or equipment or arises from the presence of hazardous materials and it is reasonably predictable that an employee could again use the equipment or be exposed to the materials in the course of work; *however*
- If the inspection reveals an adequately communicated *and* effectively enforced safety policy or program that would prevent or minimize employee exposure, including accidental exposure to the hazardous condition, it would not be reasonably predictable that employee exposure could occur. In such circumstances, no citation should be issued in relation to the condition.

**c. Documenting Employee Exposure.**

The inspector shall thoroughly document exposure, both observed and unobserved, for each potential violation. This includes:

- Statements by the exposed employees, the employer (particularly the immediate supervisor of the exposed employee), other witnesses (other employees who have observed exposure to the hazardous condition), union

representatives, engineering personnel, management, or members of the exposed employee's family;

- Recorded statements or signed written statements;
- Photographs, videotapes, and/or measurements; and
- All relevant documents (e.g., autopsy reports, police reports, job specifications, site plans, Injury/Illness logs, equipment manuals, employer work rules, employer sampling results, employer safety and health programs, and employer disciplinary policies, etc.).

**C. Regulatory Requirements.**

Violations shall be documented and cited when an employer does not comply with posting, recordkeeping, and reporting requirements of the regulations contained in Subpart A and B of the Administrative Rules [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350].

**D. Employer/Employee Responsibilities.**

**1. Employer Responsibilities.**

The General Duty Clause, Section 3 of the Health & Safety Act states: "It shall be the duty of every employer under this Act to provide reasonable protection to the lives, health and safety and to furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees." This section also states "It shall be the duty of each employer under this Act to comply with the occupational health and safety standards promulgated under this Act and the Safety Inspection & Education Act."

**2. Employee Responsibilities.**

- a. Section 3 of the Health & Safety Act also states: "It shall be the duty of every employee to comply with such rules as are promulgated from time to time by the Director pursuant to this Act or the Safety Inspection & Education Act, which are applicable to his own actions and conduct." The Act(s) does/do not provide for the issuance of citations or the proposal of penalties against employees. Employers are responsible for employee compliance with the standards.

- b. In cases where the inspector determines that employees are systematically refusing to comply with a standard applicable to their own actions and conduct, the matter shall be referred to the Enforcement Assistant Manager who shall consult with the Division Manager or designee.
- c. The inspector is expected to obtain information to ascertain whether the employer is exercising appropriate oversight of the workplace to ensure compliance with the Act(s). Concerted refusals by employees to comply will not ordinarily bar the issuance of a citation where the employer has failed to exercise its authority to adequately supervise employees, including taking appropriate disciplinary action.

3. **Affirmative Defenses.**

An affirmative defense is a claim which, if established by the employer, will excuse it from a violation which has otherwise been documented by the inspector. Although affirmative defenses must be proved by the employer at the time of the hearing, the inspector should preliminarily gather evidence to rebut an employer's potential argument supporting any such defenses. See, *Affirmative Defenses section*, for additional information.

4. **Multi-Employer Worksites.**

On multi-employer worksites in all industry sectors, more than one employer may be cited for a hazardous condition that violates an IDOL-OSHA standard.

For specific and detailed guidance, see the multi-employer policy contained in [CPL 02-00-124](#), *Multi-Employer Citation Policy*, dated December 10, 1999.

**II. Serious Violations.**

A. **Definition.**

Section 2.3(b)(1)(B) of the Safety Inspection & Education Act provides that "a serious violation shall be deemed to exist in a place of employment if there is a substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result from a condition which exists, or from one or more practices, means, methods, operations, or processes which have been adopted or are in use in such place of employment unless the employer did not know and could not, with the exercise of reasonable diligence, have known of the presence of the violation."

**B. Establishing Serious Violations.**

1. Inspectors shall consider four factors in determining whether a violation is to be classified as serious. The first three factors address whether there is a substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result from an accident/incident or exposure relating to the violative condition. The **probability** that an incident or illness will occur is not to be considered in determining whether a violation is serious, but is considered in determining the relative gravity of the violation. The fourth factor addresses whether the employer knew or could have known of the violative condition.
2. The classification of a violation need not be completed for each instance. It should be done once for each citation or, if violation items are grouped in a citation, once for the group.
3. If the citation consists of multiple instances or grouped violations, the overall classification shall normally be based on the most serious item.
4. The four-factor analysis outlined below shall be followed in making the determination whether a violation is serious. Potential violations of the general duty clause shall also be evaluated on the basis of these steps to establish whether they may cause death or serious physical harm.

**C. Four Steps to be Documented.**

**1. Type of Hazardous Exposure(s).**

The first step is to identify the type of potential exposures to a hazard that the violated standard or the general duty clause is designed to prevent.

- a. The inspector need not establish the exact manner in which an exposure to a hazard could occur. However, the inspector shall note all facts which could affect the probability of an injury or illness **resulting** from a potential accident or hazardous exposure.
- b. If more than one type of hazardous exposure exists, the inspector shall determine which hazard could reasonably be

predicted to result in the most severe injury or illness and shall base the classification of the violation on that hazard.

- c. The following are examples of some types of hazardous exposures that a standard is designed to prevent:

**EXAMPLE 4-2:** Employees are observed working at the unguarded edge of an open-sided floor 30 feet above the ground in apparent violation of [§1926.501\(b\)\(1\)](#). The regulation requires that the edge of the open-sided floor be guarded by standard guardrail systems. The type of hazard the standard is designed to prevent is a fall from the edge of the floor to the ground below.

**EXAMPLE 4-3:** Employees are observed working in an area in which debris is located in apparent violation of [§1915.91\(b\)](#). The type of hazard the standard is designed to prevent here is employees tripping on debris.

**EXAMPLE 4-4:** An 8-hour time-weighted average sample reveals regular, ongoing employee overexposure to methylene chloride at 100 ppm in apparent violation of [§1910.1052](#). This is 75 ppm above the PEL mandated by the standard.

## 2. **The Type of Injury or Illness.**

The second step is to identify the most serious injury or illness that could reasonably be expected to result from the potential hazardous exposure identified in Step 1.

- a. In making this determination, the inspector shall consider all factors that would affect the severity of the injury or illness that could reasonably result from the exposure to the hazard. The inspector shall not give consideration at this point to factors relating to the **probability** that an injury or illness will occur.
- b. The following are examples of types of injuries that could reasonably be predicted to result from exposure to a particular hazard:

**EXAMPLE 4-5:** If an employee falls from the edge of an open-sided floor 30 feet to the ground below, the employee could die, break bones, suffer a concussion, or experience other serious injuries that would substantially impair a body function.



**EXAMPLE 4-6:** If an employee trips on debris, the trip may cause abrasions or bruises, but it is only marginally predictable that the employee could suffer a substantial impairment of a bodily function. If, however, the area is littered with broken glass or other sharp objects, it is reasonably predictable that an employee who tripped on debris could suffer deep cuts which could require suturing.

- c. For conditions involving exposure to air contaminants or harmful physical agents, the inspector shall consider the concentration levels of the contaminant or physical agent in determining the types of illness that could reasonably result from the exposure. [CPL 02-02-043](#), *The Chemical Information Manual*, dated July 1, 1991, shall be used to determine both toxicological properties of substances listed and a Health Code Number.
- d. In order to support a classification of serious, a determination must be made that exposure(s) at the sampled level could lead to illness. Thus, the inspector must document all evidence demonstrating that the sampled exposure(s) is representative of employee exposure(s) under normal working conditions, including identifying and recording the frequency and duration of employee exposure(s). Evidence to be considered includes:
  - The nature of the operation from which the exposure results;
  - Whether the exposure is regular and on-going or is of limited frequency and duration;
  - How long employees have worked at the operation in the past;
  - Whether employees are performing functions which can be expected to continue; and
  - Whether work practices, engineering controls, production levels, and other operating parameters are typical of normal operations.
- e. Where such evidence is difficult to obtain or inconclusive, the inspector shall estimate frequency and duration of exposures from any evidence available. In general, if it is reasonable to infer that regular, ongoing exposures could occur, the inspector

shall consider such potential exposures in determining the types of illness that could result from the violative condition. The following are some examples of illnesses that could reasonably result from exposure to a health hazard:

**EXAMPLE 4-7:** If an employee is exposed regularly to methylene chloride at 100 ppm, it is reasonable to predict that cancer could result.

**EXAMPLE 4-8:** If an employee is exposed regularly to acetic acid at 20 ppm, it is reasonable that the resulting illnesses would be irritation to eyes, nose and throat, or occupational asthma with chronic rhinitis and sinusitis.

### 3. **Potential for Death or Serious Physical Harm.**

The third step is to determine whether the type of injury or illness identified in Step 2 could include death or a form of serious physical harm. In making this determination, the inspector shall utilize the following definition of “serious physical harm:”

*Impairment of the body is defined when part of the body is made functionally useless or is substantially reduced in efficiency on or off the job. Such impairment may be permanent or temporary, chronic or acute. Injuries involving such impairment would usually require treatment by a medical doctor or other licensed health care professional.*

- a. Injuries that constitute serious physical harm include, but are not limited, to:
- Amputations (loss of all or part of a bodily appendage);
  - Concussion;
  - Crushing (internal, even though skin surface may be intact);
  - Fractures (simple or compound);
  - Burns or scalds, including electric and chemical burns;
  - Cuts, lacerations, or punctures involving significant bleeding and/or requiring suturing;

- Sprains and strains; and
  - Musculoskeletal disorders.
- b. Illnesses that constitute serious physical harm include, but are not limited, to:
- Cancer;
  - Respiratory illnesses (silicosis, asbestosis, byssinosis, etc.);
  - Hearing impairment;
  - Central nervous system impairment;
  - Visual impairment; and
  - Poisoning.
- c. The following are examples of injuries or illnesses that could reasonably result from an accident/incident or exposure and lead to death or serious physical harm:

**EXAMPLE 4-9:** If an employee falls 15 feet to the ground, suffers broken bones or a concussion, and experiences substantial impairment of a part of the body requiring treatment by a medical doctor, the injury would constitute serious physical harm.

**EXAMPLE 4-10:** If an employee trips on debris and because of the presence of sharp debris or equipment suffers a deep cut to the hand requiring suturing, the use of the hand could be substantially reduced. This injury would be classified as serious.

**EXAMPLE 4-11:** An employee develops chronic beryllium disease after long-term exposure to beryllium at a concentration in air of  $0.004 \text{ mg/m}^3$ , and his or her breathing capacity is significantly reduced. This illness would constitute serious physical harm.

*NOTE: The key determination is the likelihood that death or serious harm will result **IF** an accident or exposure occurs. **The likelihood of an accident occurring is***

*addressed in penalty assessments and not by the classification.*

4. **Knowledge of Hazardous Condition.**

The fourth step is to determine whether the employer knew or, with the exercise of reasonable diligence, could have known, of the presence of the **hazardous condition**.

- a. The knowledge requirement is met if it is established that the employer actually knew of the hazardous condition constituting the apparent violation. Examples include the employer saw the condition, an employee or employee representative reported it to the employer, or an employee was previously injured by the condition and the employer knew of the injury. The inspector shall record any/all evidence that establishes employer knowledge of the condition or practice.
- b. If it cannot be determined that the employer has actual knowledge of a hazardous condition, the knowledge requirement may be established if there is evidence that the employer could have known of it through the exercise of reasonable diligence. The inspector shall record any evidence that substantiates that the employer could have known of the hazardous condition. Examples of such evidence include:
  - The violation/hazard was in plain view and obvious;
  - The duration of the hazardous condition was not brief;
  - The employer failed to regularly inspect the workplace for readily identifiable hazards; and
  - The employer failed to train and supervise employees regarding the particular hazard.
- c. The actual or constructive knowledge of a supervisor who is aware of a violative condition or practice can usually be imputed to the employer for purposes of establishing knowledge. In cases where the employer contends that the supervisor's own conduct constituted an isolated event of employee misconduct, the inspector shall attempt to determine whether the supervisor violated an established work rule, and the extent to which the supervisor was trained in the rule and supervised regarding compliance to prevent such conduct.

### III. General Duty Requirements.

The Act requires that “Each employer shall furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees.”

#### A. Evaluation of General Duty Requirements.

In general, the following elements are necessary to prove a violation of the general duty clause:

- ▶ The employer failed to keep the workplace free of a hazard to which employees of that employer were exposed;
- ▶ The hazard was recognized;
- ▶ The hazard was causing or was likely to cause death or serious physical harm; and
- ▶ There was a feasible and useful method to correct the hazard.

A general duty citation must involve both the presence of a serious hazard and exposure of the cited employer’s **own** employees.

#### B. Elements of a General Duty Requirement Violation.

##### 1. Definition of a Hazard.

- a. The hazard in a General Duty citation is a *workplace condition* or practice to which employees are exposed, creating the *potential for death or serious physical harm* to employees.
- b. These conditions or practices must be **clearly stated in a citation** so as to apprise employers of their obligations and must be ones the employer can reasonably be expected to prevent. The hazard must therefore be defined in terms of the **presence of hazardous conditions or** practices that present a particular danger to employees.

##### 2. Do Not Cite the Lack of a Particular Abatement Method.

- a. General duty clause citations are not intended to allege that the violation is a failure to implement certain precautions, corrective actions, or other abatement measures but rather addresses the failure to prevent or remove a particular hazard.

The General Duty Clause therefore does not mandate a particular abatement measure but only requires an employer to render the workplace free of recognized hazards by any feasible and effective means the employer wishes to utilize.

- b. In situations where a question arises regarding distinguishing between a dangerous workplace condition or practice and the lack of an abatement method, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall consult with the Division Manager or designee, for assistance in correctly identifying the hazard.

**EXAMPLE 4-12:** Employees are conducting sanding operations that create sparks in the proximity of magnesium dust (workplace condition or practice) exposing them to the serious injury of burns from a fire (potential for physical harm). One proposed method of abatement may be engineering controls such as adequate ventilation. The “hazard” is sanding that creates sparks in the presence of magnesium that may result in a fire capable of seriously injuring employees, not the lack of adequate ventilation.

**EXAMPLE 4-13:** Employees are operating tools that generate sparks in the presence of an ignitable gas (workplace condition) exposing them to the danger of an explosion (physical harm). The hazard is use of tools that create sparks in a volatile atmosphere that may cause an explosion capable of seriously injuring employees, not the lack of approved equipment.

**EXAMPLE 4-14:** In a workplace situation involving high-pressure machinery that vents gases next to a work area where the employer has not installed proper high-pressure equipment, has improperly installed the equipment that is in place, and does not have adequate work rules addressing the dangers of high pressure gas, there are three abatement measures the employer has failed to take. However, there is only one hazard (i.e., employee exposure to the venting of high-pressure gases into a work area that may cause serious burns from steam discharges).

### 3. **The Hazard is Not a Particular Accident/Incident.**

- a. The occurrence of an accident/incident does not necessarily mean that the employer has violated the General Duty Clause, although the accident/incident may be evidence of a hazard. In some cases a violation may be unrelated to the cause of the

accident/incident. Although accident/incident facts may be relevant and shall be documented, the citation shall address the **hazard in the workplace that existed prior to the accident/incident**, not the particular facts that led to the occurrence of the accident/incident.

**EXAMPLE 4-15:** A fire occurred in a workplace where flammable materials were present. No one was injured by the fire but an employee, disregarding the clear instructions of his supervisor to use an available exit, jumped out of a window and broke a leg. The danger of fire due to the presence of flammable materials may be a recognized hazard causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm, but the action of the employee may be an instance of unpreventable employee misconduct. The citation must address the underlying workplace fire hazard, not the accident/incident involving the employee.

4. **The Hazard Must be Reasonably Foreseeable.**

The hazard for which a citation is issued must be reasonably foreseeable. All of the factors that could cause a hazard need not be present in the same place or at the same time in order to prove foreseeability of the hazard; e.g., an explosion need not be imminent.

**EXAMPLE 4-16:** If combustible gas and oxygen are present in sufficient quantities in a confined area to cause an explosion if ignited, but no ignition source is present or could be present, no General Duty Clause violation would exist. However, if the employer has not taken sufficient safety precautions to preclude the presence or use of ignition sources in the confined area, then a foreseeable hazard may exist.

*NOTE: It is necessary to establish the reasonable foreseeability of the workplace hazard, rather than the particular circumstances that led to an accident/incident.*

**EXAMPLE 4-17:** A titanium dust fire spreads from one room to another because an open can of gasoline was in the second room. An employee who usually worked in both rooms is burned in the second room as a result of the gasoline igniting. The presence of gasoline in the second room may be a rare occurrence. However, it is not necessary to demonstrate that a fire in both rooms could reasonably occur, but only that a fire

hazard, in this case due to the presence of titanium dust, was reasonably foreseeable.

**5. The Hazard Must Affect the Cited Employer's Employees.**

- a. The employees exposed to the General Duty Clause hazard must be the employees of the cited employer. An employer who may have created, contributed to, and/or controlled the hazard normally shall not be cited for such a violation if his own employees are not exposed to the hazard.
- b. In complex situations, such as multi-employer worksites, where it may be difficult to identify the precise employment relationship between the employer to be cited and the exposed employees, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall consult with the Division Manager or designee to determine the sufficiency of the evidence regarding the employment relationship.
- c. The fact that an employer denies that exposed workers are his/her employees is not necessarily determinative of the employment relationship issue. Whether or not exposed persons are employees of an employer depends on several factors, the most important of which is who controls the manner in which the employees perform their assigned work. The question of who pays employees in and of itself may not be the determining factor to establish a relationship.

**6. The Hazard Must Be Recognized.**

Recognition of a hazard can be established on the basis of employer recognition, industry recognition, or "common-sense" recognition. The use of common sense as the basis for establishing recognition shall be limited to special circumstances. Recognition of the hazard must be supported by the following evidence and adequate documentation in the file:

**a. Employer Recognition.**

- A recognized hazard can be established by evidence of actual employer knowledge of a hazardous condition or practice. Evidence of employer recognition may consist of written or oral statements made by the employer or other management or supervisory personnel during or before the IDOL inspection.



- Employer awareness of a hazard may also be demonstrated by a review of company memorandums, safety work rules that specifically identify a hazard, operations manuals, standard operating procedures, and collective bargaining agreements. In addition, prior accidents/incidents, near misses known to the employer, injury and illness reports, or workers' compensation data, may also show employer knowledge of a hazard.
- Employer awareness of a hazard may also be demonstrated by prior inspection history which involved the same hazard.
- Employee complaints or grievances and safety committee reports to supervisory personnel may establish recognition of the hazard, but the evidence should show that the complaints were not merely infrequent, off-hand comments.
- An employer's own corrective actions may serve as the basis for establishing employer recognition of the hazard if the employer did not adequately continue or maintain the corrective action or if the corrective action did not afford effective protection to the employees.

*NOTE: An inspector is to gather as many of these facts as possible to support establishing a General Duty Clause violation.*

**b. Industry Recognition.**

- A hazard is recognized if the employer's relevant industry is aware of its existence. Recognition by an industry other than the industry to which the employer belongs is generally insufficient to prove this element of a General Duty Clause violation. Although evidence of recognition by an employer's similar operations within an industry is preferred, evidence that the employer's overall industry recognizes the hazard may be sufficient. The Enforcement Assistant Manager shall consult with the Division Manager or designee on this issue. Industry recognition of a hazard can be established in several ways:
  - Statements by safety or health experts who are familiar with the relevant conditions in industry

(regardless of whether they work in the industry);

- Evidence of implementation of abatement methods to deal with the particular hazard by other members of the industry;
- Manufacturers' warnings on equipment or in literature that are relevant to the hazard;
- Statistical or empirical studies conducted by the employer's industry that demonstrate awareness of the hazard. Evidence such as studies conducted by the employee representatives, the union or other employees must also be considered if the employer or the industry has been made aware of them;
- Government and insurance industry studies, if the employer or the employer's industry is familiar with the studies and recognizes their validity;
- State and local laws or regulations that apply in the jurisdiction where the violation is alleged to have occurred and which currently are enforced against the industry in question. In such cases, however, corroborating evidence of recognition is recommended; and/or
- If the relevant industry participated in the committees drafting national consensus standards such as the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and other private standard-setting organizations, this can constitute industry recognition. Otherwise, such private standards normally shall be used only as corroborating evidence of recognition. Preambles to these standards that discuss the hazards involved may show hazard recognition as much as, or more than, the actual standards. However, these private standards **cannot** be enforced as IDOL-OSHA standards, but they may be used to provide evidence of industry

recognition, seriousness of the hazard or feasibility of abatement methods.

- In cases where other State and local government agencies have codes or regulations covering hazards not addressed by IDOL-OSHA standards, the Enforcement Assistant Manager, upon consultation with the Division Manager or designee, shall determine whether the hazard is to be cited under the General Duty Clause or referred to the appropriate local agency for enforcement.

**EXAMPLE 4-18:** A safety hazard on a personnel elevator in a factory is documented during an inspection. It is determined that the hazard may not be cited under the General Duty Clause, but there is a local code that addresses this hazard and a local agency actively enforces the code. The situation normally shall be referred to the local enforcement agency in lieu of citing the General Duty Clause.

- References that may be used to supplement other evidence to help demonstrate industry recognition include the following:
  - NIOSH criteria documents.
  - EPA publications.
  - National Cancer Institute and other agency publications.
  - OSHA Hazard Alerts.
  - OSHA Technical Manual.

**c. Common Sense Recognition.**

If industry or employer recognition of the hazard cannot be established in accordance with (a) and (b), hazard recognition can still be established if a hazardous condition is so obvious that any reasonable person would have recognized it. This form of recognition should only be used in flagrant or obvious cases.

**EXAMPLE 4-19:** In a general industry situation, courts have held that any reasonable person would recognize that it is hazardous to use an unenclosed chute to dump bricks into an alleyway 26 feet below where unwarned employees worked. In construction, the General Duty Clause could not be cited in this situation because [§1926.252](#) or [§1926.852](#) applies. In the context of a chemical processing plant, common sense recognition was established where hazardous substances were being vented into a work area.

**7. The Hazard Was Causing or Likely to Cause Death or Serious Physical Harm.**

- a. This element of a General Duty Clause violation is virtually identical to the substantial probability element of a serious violation under the Act(s).
- b. This element of a General Duty Clause violation can be established by showing that:
  - An actual death or serious injury resulted from the recognized hazard, whether immediately prior to the inspection or at other times and places; or
  - If an accident/incident occurred, the likely result would be death or serious physical harm.

**EXAMPLE 4-20:** An employee is standing at the edge of an unguarded floor 25 feet above the ground. If a fall occurred, death or serious physical harm (e.g., broken bones) is likely to result.

- c. In the health context, establishing serious physical harm at the cited levels may be challenging if the potential for illness/harm requires the passage of a substantial period of time. In such cases, expert testimony is crucial to establish there is probability that long-term serious physical harm will occur. It will generally be less difficult to establish this element for acute illnesses, since the immediacy of the effects will make the causal relationship clearer. In general, the following must be shown to establish that the hazard causes, or is likely to cause, death or serious physical harm when such illness or death will occur only after the passage of time:

- Regular and continuing employee exposure at the workplace to the toxic substance at the measured levels could reasonably occur;
- An illness reasonably could result from such regular and continuing employee exposures; and
- If illness does occur, the likely result is death or serious physical harm.

8. **The Hazard May be Corrected by a Feasible and Useful Method.**

- To establish a General Duty Clause violation, the agency must also identify the existence of a measure(s) that is feasible, available, and likely to correct the hazard. Evidence regarding feasible abatement measures shall indicate that the recognized hazard, rather than a particular accident/incident, is preventable.
- If the proposed abatement method would eliminate or significantly reduce the hazard beyond whatever measures the employer may be taking, a General Duty Clause citation may be issued. A citation will not be issued merely because the agency is aware of an abatement method different from that of the employer, if the proposed method would not reduce the hazard significantly more than the employer's method. In some cases, only a series of abatement methods will materially reduce a hazard and then all potential abatement methods shall be listed. For example, an abatement note shall be included on the citation such as "Among other methods, one feasible and acceptable means of abatement would be to \_\_\_\_." (Fill in the blank with the specified abatement recommendation.)
- Examples of such feasible and acceptable means of abatement include, but are not limited, to:
  - The employer's own abatement method,/ which existed prior to the inspection but was not implemented;
  - The implementation of feasible abatement measures by the employer after the accident/incident or inspection;
  - The implementation of abatement measures by other employers/companies; and

- Recommendations made by the manufacturer addressing safety measures for the hazardous equipment involved, as well as suggested abatement methods contained in trade journals, national consensus standards and individual employer work rules. National consensus standards shall not solely be relied on to mandate specific abatement methods.

**EXAMPLE 4-21:** An ANSI standard addresses the hazard of exposure to hydrogen sulfide gas and refers to various abatement methods, such as the prevention of the buildup of materials that create the gas and the provision of ventilation. The ANSI standard may be used as general evidence of the existence of feasible abatement measures.

In this example, the citation shall state that the recognized hazard of exposure to hydrogen sulfide gas was present in the workplace and that a feasible and useful abatement method existed; e.g., preventing the buildup of gas by providing an adequate ventilation system. It would not be correct to base the citation on the employer's failure to prevent the buildup of materials that could create the gas and to provide a ventilation system as both of these are abatement methods, not recognized hazards.

- d. Evidence provided by expert witnesses may be used to demonstrate feasibility of abatement methods. In addition, although it is not necessary to establish that an industry recognizes a particular abatement measure, however, such evidence may be used if available.

#### C. Use of the General Duty Clause.

1. The general duty clause shall be used only where there is no standard that applies to the particular hazard and in situations where a recognized hazard is created in whole or in part by conditions not covered by a standard. See [§1910.5\(f\)](#).

**EXAMPLE 4-22:** A hazard covered only partially by a standard would be construction employees exposed to a collapse hazard because of a failure to properly install reinforcing steel. Construction standards contain requirements for reinforcing steel in wall, piers, columns, and similar vertical

structures, but do not contain requirements for steel placement in horizontal planes, e.g., a concrete floor. A failure to properly install reinforcing steel in a floor in accordance with industry standards and/or structural drawings could be cited under the general duty clause.

**EXAMPLE 4-23:** The powered industrial truck standard at [§1910.178](#) does not address all potential hazards associated with forklift use. For instance, while that standard deals with the hazards associated with a forklift operator leaving his vehicle unattended or dismounting the vehicle and working in its vicinity, it does not contain requirements for the use of operator restraint systems. An employer's failure to address the hazard of a tip over (forklifts are particularly susceptible to stopovers) by requiring operators of powered industrial trucks equipped with restraint devices or seat belts to use those devices could be cited under the general duty clause. See [CPL 02-01-028](#), *Compliance Assistance for the Powered Industrial Truck Operator Training Standards*, dated November 30, 2000, for additional guidance.

2. The general duty clause may also be applicable to some types of employment that are inherently dangerous (fire brigades, emergency rescue operations, confined space entry, etc.).
  - a. Employers involved in such occupations must take the necessary steps to eliminate or minimize employee exposure to all recognized hazards that are likely to cause death or serious physical harm. These steps include an assessment of hazards that may be encountered, providing appropriate protective equipment, and any training, instruction, or necessary equipment.
  - b. An employer, who has failed to take such steps and allows its employees to be exposed to a hazard, may be cited under the general duty clause.

**D. Limitations of Use of the General Duty Clause.**

The General Duty Clause is to be used only within the guidelines given in this chapter.

1. **The General Duty Clause Shall Not be Used When a Standard Applies to a Hazard.**

As discussed above, the General Duty Clause may not be cited if an IDOL-OSHA standard applies to the hazardous working condition. If there is a question as to whether a standard applies, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall consult with the Division Manager or designee. The Legal Division will assist the Division Manager or designee in determining the applicability of a standard prior to the issuance of a citation if needed.

**EXAMPLE 4-24:** The General Duty Clause shall not be cited for electrical hazards as [§1910.303\(b\)](#) and [§1926.403\(b\)](#) require that electrical equipment is to be kept free from recognized hazards that are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees.

2. **The General Duty Clause Shall Normally Not be Used to Impose a Stricter Requirement than that Required by the Standard.**

**EXAMPLE 4-25:** A standard provides for a permissible exposure limit (PEL) of 5 ppm. Even if data establish that a 3 ppm level is a recognized hazard, the General Duty Clause shall not be cited to require that the lower level be achieved. If the standard has only a time-weighted average permissible exposure level and the hazard involves exposure above a recognized ceiling level, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall consult with the Division Manager or designee

*NOTE: An exception to this rule may apply if it can be proven that "an employer knows a particular safety or health standard is inadequate to protect his employees against the specific hazard it is intended to address." See, Int. Union UAW v. General Dynamics Land Systems Division, 815 F.2d 1570 (D.C. Cir. 1987). Such cases shall be subject to pre-citation review.*

3. **The General Duty Clause Shall Normally Not be Used to Require Additional Abatement Methods not Set Forth in an Existing Standard.**

If a toxic substance standard covers engineering control requirements but not requirements for medical surveillance, the General Duty Clause shall not be cited to additionally require medical surveillance. Enforcement Assistant Managers shall evaluate the circumstances of special situations in accord with guidelines stated herein and consult with the Division Manager or designee to determine whether a General Duty Clause citation can be issued in those special cases.



#### 4. **Alternative Standards.**

The following standards shall be considered carefully before issuing a General Duty Clause citation for a health hazard.

- a. There are a number of general standards that shall be considered rather than General Duty Clause in situations where the hazard is not covered by a particular standard. If a hazard not covered by a specific standard can be substantially corrected by compliance with a personal protective equipment (PPE) standard, the PPE standard shall be cited. In general industry, [§1910.132\(a\)](#) may be appropriate where exposure to a hazard may be prevented by the wearing of PPE.
- b. For a health hazard, the particular toxic substance standard, such as asbestos and coke oven emissions, shall be cited where appropriate. If those particular standards do not apply, however, other standards may be applicable; e.g., the air contaminant levels contained in [§1910.1000](#) in general industry and in [§1926.55](#) for construction.
- c. Another general standard is [§1910.134\(a\)](#), which addresses the hazards of breathing harmful air contaminants not covered under [§1910.1000](#) or another specific standard, and which may be cited for failure to use feasible engineering controls or respirators.
- d. Violations of [§1910.141\(g\)\(2\)](#) may be cited when employees are allowed to consume food or beverages in an area exposed to a toxic material, and [§1910.132\(a\)](#) where there is a potential for toxic materials to be absorbed through the skin.

#### E. **Classification of Violations Cited Under the General Duty Clause.**

Only hazards presenting serious physical harm or death may be cited under the general duty clause (including willful and/or repeated violations that would otherwise qualify as serious violations). Other-than-serious citations shall not be issued for general duty clause violations.

#### F. **Procedures for Implementation of General Duty Clause Enforcement.**

To ensure that citations of the general duty clause are defensible, the following procedures shall be followed:

##### 1. **Gathering Evidence and Preparing the File.**

- a. The evidence necessary to establish each element of a General Duty Clause violation shall be documented in the file. This includes all photographs, videotapes, sampling data, witness statements, and other documentary and physical evidence necessary to establish the violation. Additional documentation includes evidence of specific and/or general awareness of a hazard, why it was detectable and recognized, and any supporting statements or reference materials.
- b. If copies of documents relied on to establish the various General Duty Clause elements cannot be obtained before issuing the citation, these documents shall be accurately cited and identified in the file so they can be obtained later if necessary.
- c. If experts are necessary to establish any element(s) of a General Duty Clause violation, such experts shall be consulted **prior to the citation being issued** and their opinions noted in the file.

## **2. Pre-Citation Review.**

The Division Manager shall review and approve all proposed General Duty Clause citations.

## **IV. Other-than-Serious Violations.**

This type of violation shall be cited in situations where the accident/incident or illness that would be most likely result from a hazardous condition would probably not cause death or serious physical harm, but would have a direct and immediate relationship to the safety and health of employees.

## **V. Willful Violations.**

A willful violation exists under the Act(s) where an employer has demonstrated either an intentional disregard for the requirements of the Act(s) or a plain indifference to employee safety and health. Enforcement Assistant Managers are encouraged to consult with the Division Manager when developing willful citations. The following guidance and procedures apply whenever there is evidence that a willful violation may exist:

### **A. Intentional Disregard Violations.**

An employer commits an intentional and knowing violation if:

1. An employer was aware of the requirements of the Act(s) or of an applicable standard or regulation and was also aware of a condition or practice in violation of those requirements, but did not abate the hazard; or
2. An employer was not aware of the requirements of the Act(s) or standards, but had knowledge of a comparable legal requirement (e.g., federal or local law) and was also aware of a condition or practice in violation of that requirement.

*NOTE: Good faith efforts made by the employer to minimize or abate a hazard may sometimes preclude the issuance of a willful violation. In such cases, inspectors should consult the Division Manager or designee if a willful classification is under consideration.*

3. A willful citation also may be issued where an employer knows that specific steps must be taken to address a hazard, but substitutes its judgment for the requirements of the standard.

**EXAMPLE 4-26:** The employer was issued repeated citations addressing the same or similar conditions, but did not take corrective action.

**B. Plain Indifference Violations.**

1. An employer commits a violation with plain indifference to employee safety and health where:
  - a. Management officials were aware of an IDOL-OSHA requirement applicable to the employer's business but made little or no effort to communicate the requirement to lower level supervisors and employees.
  - b. Officials were aware of a plainly obvious hazardous condition but made little or no effort to prevent violations from occurring.

**EXAMPLE 4-27:** The employer is aware of the existence of unguarded power presses that have caused near misses, lacerations and amputations in the past and does nothing to abate the hazard.

- c. An employer was not aware of any legal requirement, but knows that a condition or practice in the workplace is a serious hazard to the safety or health of employees and makes little or

no effort to determine the extent of the problem or to take the corrective action. Knowledge of a hazard may be gained from such means as insurance company reports, safety committee or other internal reports, the occurrence of illnesses or injuries, or complaints of employees or their representatives.

*NOTE: Voluntary employer self-audits that assess workplace safety and health conditions shall not normally be used as a basis of a willful violation. However, once an employer's self-audit identifies a hazardous condition, the employer must promptly take appropriate measures to correct a violative condition and provide interim employee protection.).*

- d. Willfulness may also be established despite lack of knowledge of a legal requirement if circumstances show that the employer would have placed no importance on such knowledge.

**EXAMPLE 4-28:** An employer sends employees into a deep unprotected excavation containing a hazardous atmosphere without ever inspecting for potential hazards.

- 2. It is not necessary that the violation be committed with a bad purpose or malicious intent to be deemed “willful.” It is sufficient that the violation was deliberate, voluntary or intentional as distinguished from inadvertent, accidental or ordinarily negligent.
- 3. Inspectors shall develop and record on the proposed violation worksheet all evidence that indicates employer knowledge of the requirements of a standard, and any reasons for why it disregarded statutory or other legal obligations to protect employees against a hazardous condition. Willfulness may exist if an employer is informed by employees or employee representatives regarding an alleged hazardous condition and does not make a reasonable effort to verify or correct the hazard. Additional factors to consider in determining whether to characterize a violation as willful include:
  - a. The nature of the employer's work and the knowledge regarding safety and health matters that could reasonably be expected in that industry;
  - b. Any precautions taken by the employer to limit the hazardous conditions;
  - c. The employer's awareness of the Act(s) and of its responsibility to provide safe and healthful working conditions; and

- d. If similar violations and/or hazardous conditions have been brought to the attention of the employer through prior citations, accidents, warnings from IDOL or officials from other government agencies or an employee safety committee regarding the requirements of a standard.
4. Also, include facts showing that even if the employer was not consciously violating the Act(s), it was aware that the violative condition existed and made no reasonable effort to eliminate it.

## **VI. Criminal/Willful Violations.**

Section 2.3(b) of the Safety Inspection and Education Act, as amended, provides that: “Any public employer who willfully violates any standard, rule, or order promulgated pursuant to this Act or the Health and Safety Act shall be charged with a Class 4 felony if that violation causes death to any employee.”

### **A. Division(s) Coordination.**

The Division Manager, in coordination with the Legal Division, shall carefully evaluate all willful cases involving employee deaths to determine whether they may involve criminal violations of Section 2.3 (b) of the Safety Inspection and Education Act. Because the quality of the evidence available is of paramount importance in these investigations, there shall be early and close discussions between the inspector, the Enforcement Assistant Manager, the Division Manager, and the Legal Division in developing all evidence when there is a potential criminal/willful violation.

### **B. Criteria for Investigating Possible Criminal/Willful Violations**

The following criteria shall be considered in investigating possible criminal/willful violations:

1. In order to establish a criminal/willful violation IDOL must prove that:
  - a. The employer violated an IDOL-OSHA standard. A criminal/willful violation cannot be based on violation of the General Duty Clause.
  - b. The violation was willful in nature.
  - c. The violation of the standard caused the death of an employee. In order to prove that the violation caused the death of an

employee, there must be evidence which clearly demonstrates that the violation of the standard was the direct cause of, or a contributing factor to, an employee's death.

2. If asked during an investigation, inspectors should inform employers that any violation found to be willful that has caused or contributed to the death of an employee is evaluated for potential criminal referral to the Office of the Illinois Attorney General.
3. Following the investigation, if the Enforcement Assistant Manager decides to recommend criminal prosecution, a memorandum shall be forwarded promptly to the Division Manager. It shall include an evaluation of the possible criminal charges, taking into consideration the burden of proof requiring that the Government's case be proven beyond a reasonable doubt. In addition, if correction of the hazardous condition is at issue, this shall be noted in the transmittal memorandum, because in most cases prosecution of a criminal/willful case stays the resolution of the civil case and its abatement requirements.
4. The Division Manager shall normally issue a civil citation in accordance with current procedures even if the citation involves charges under consideration for criminal prosecution. The Director shall be notified of such cases. In addition, the case shall be promptly forwarded to the Legal Division for possible referral to the Office of the Illinois Attorney General.

**C. Willful Violations Related to a Fatality**

Where a willful violation is related to a fatality and a decision is made not to recommend a criminal referral, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall ensure the case file contains documentation justifying that conclusion. The file documentation should indicate which elements of a potential criminal violation make the case unsuitable for referral.

**VII. Repeated Violations.**

- A. An employer may be cited for a repeated violation if that employer has been cited previously for the same or substantially similar condition or hazard and the citation has become a final order. A citation may become a final order by operation of law when an employer does not contest the citation, or pursuant to court decision or settlement.
- B. **Identical Standards.**

Generally, similar workplace conditions or hazards can be demonstrated by showing that in both situations the identical standard was violated, but there are exceptions.

**EXAMPLE 4-28:** A citation was previously issued for a violation of [§1910.132\(a\)](#) for not requiring the use of safety-toe footwear for employees. A recent inspection of the same establishment revealed a violation of [§1910.132\(a\)](#) for not requiring the use of head protection (hardhats). Although the same standard was involved, the hazardous conditions in each case are not substantially similar and therefore a repeated violation would not be appropriate.

**C. Different Standards.**

In some circumstances, similar conditions or hazards can be demonstrated even when different standards are violated.

**EXAMPLE 4-29:** A citation was previously issued for a violation of [§1910.28\(d\)\(7\)](#) for not installing standard guardrails on a tubular welded frame scaffold platform. A recent inspection of the same employer reveals a violation of [§1910.28\(c\)\(14\)](#) for not installing guardrails on a tube and coupler scaffold platform. Although different standards are involved, the conditions and hazards (falls) present during both inspections were substantially similar, and therefore a repeated violation would be appropriate.

*NOTE: There is no requirement that the previous and current violations occur at the same workplace or under the same supervisor.*

**D. Obtaining Inspection History.**

For purposes of determining whether a violation is repeated, the following criteria shall apply:

**1. Serious Violations.**

- a. When serious violations are to be cited, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall obtain a history of citations previously issued to this employer at all of its identified establishments, within the same two digit Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) or three digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code.
- b. If these violations have been previously cited within the time limitations (described in this chapter) and have become final orders, a repeated citation may be issued.

- c. Under special circumstances, the Division Manager, in consultation with the Legal Division, may also issue citations for repeated violations without regard for the SIC code.

## **2. Violations of Lesser Gravity.**

When violations are of lesser gravity than serious, Enforcement Assistant Managers should obtain a national inspection history whenever the circumstances of the current inspection would result in multiple serious, repeat, or willful citations. This is particularly essential if the employer is known to have multiple establishments and has been subject to a significant case in other areas or at other mobile worksites.

## **E. Time Limitations.**

1. Although there are no statutory limitations on the length of time that a prior citation was issued as a basis for a repeated violation, the following policy shall generally be followed.

A citation will be issued as a repeated violation if:

- a. The citation is issued within 5 years of the final order date of the previous citation or within 5 years of the final abatement date, whichever is later; and
  - b. If the previous citation was contested, within 5 years of the Administrative Law Judge's final order or the Court of Appeals final mandate.
2. When a violation is found during an inspection and a repeated citation has previously been issued for a substantially similar condition, the violation may be classified as a second instance repeated violation with a corresponding increase in penalty.

EXAMPLE - An inspection is conducted in an establishment and a violation of [§1910.217\(c\)\(1\)\(i\)](#) is found. That citation is not contested by the employer and becomes a final order on October 17, 2006. On December 8, 2008, a citation for repeated violation of the same standard was issued. The violation found during the current inspection may be treated as a second instance repeated.

3. In cases of multiple prior repeated citations, the Division Manager or designee shall be consulted for guidance.

## **F. Repeated v. Failure to Abate.**



A failure to abate exists when a previously cited hazardous condition, practice or non-complying equipment has not been brought into compliance since the prior inspection (i.e., the violation is continuously present) and is discovered at a later inspection. If, however, the violation was corrected, but later reoccurs, the subsequent occurrence is a repeated violation.

**G. Enforcement Assistant Manager Responsibilities.**

After the inspector makes a recommendation that a violation should be cited as repeated, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall:

1. Ensure that the violation meets the criteria outlined in the preceding subparagraphs of this section;
2. Ensure that the case file includes a copy of the citation for the prior violation, the VIOLATION WORKSHEETs describing the prior violation that serves as the basis for the repeated citation, and any other supporting evidence that describes the violation. If the prior violation citation is not available, the basis for the repeated citation shall, nevertheless, be adequately documented in the case file. The file shall also include all documents showing that the citation is a final order and on what date it became final (i.e., if the case was not contested, the **certified mail card** (final 15 working days from employer's receipt of the citation), **signed Informal Settlement** (final 15 working days from when *both* parties signed) or **Formal Settlement Agreements and Notice of Docketing** (final 30 days after docketing date), or **Judge's Decision and Notice of Docketing** (final 30 days after docketing));
3. The inspection database information shall not be used as the sole means to establish that a prior violation has been issued.
4. In circumstances when it is not clear that the violation meets the criteria outlined in this section, consult with the Division Manager before issuing a repeated citation; and
5. If a repeated citation is issued, ensure that the cited employer is fully informed of the previous violations serving as a basis for the repeated citation by notation in the Alleged Violation Description (AVD) portion of the citation, using the following or similar language:

The (employer name) was previously cited for a violation of this occupational safety and health

standard or its equivalent standard (name previously cited standard), which was contained in IDOL inspection number\_\_\_\_\_, citation number\_\_\_\_\_, item number\_\_\_\_\_ and was affirmed as a final order on (date), with respect to a workplace located at\_\_\_\_\_.

## **VIII. De Minimis Conditions.**

De minimis conditions are those where an employer has implemented a measure different than one specified in a standard, that has no direct or immediate relationship to safety or health. Whenever de minimis conditions are found during an inspection, the employer shall be notified verbally and the inspector shall note in the case file.

### **A. Criteria.**

The criteria for finding a de minimis condition are as follows:

1. An employer complies with the intent of the standard, yet deviates from its particular requirements in a manner that has no direct or immediate impact on employee safety or health. These deviations may involve, for example, distance specifications, construction material requirements, use of incorrect color, and minor variations from recordkeeping, testing, or inspection regulations.

**EXAMPLE 4-31:** [§1910.27\(b\)\(1\)\(ii\)](#) allows 12 inches as the maximum distance between ladder rungs. Where the rungs are 13 inches apart, the condition is de minimis.

**EXAMPLE 4-32:** [§1910.217\(e\)\(1\)\(ii\)](#) requires that mechanical power presses be inspected and tested at least weekly. If the machinery is seldom used, inspection and testing prior to each use is adequate to meet the intent of the standard.

2. An employer complies with a proposed IDOL-OSHA standard or amendment or a consensus standard rather than with the standard in effect at the time of the inspection and the employer's action clearly provides equal or greater employee protection.
3. An employer complies with a written interpretation issued by IDOL or the OSHA National Office or an OSHA Regional Office.

4. An employer's workplace protections are “state of the art” and technically more enhanced than the requirements of the applicable standard and provides equivalent or more effective employee safety or health protection.

**B. Professional Judgment.**

Professional judgment should be exercised in determining whether noncompliance with a standard constitutes a de minimis condition.

**C. Enforcement Assistant Manager Responsibilities.**

Enforcement Assistant Managers shall ensure that all proposed de minimis notices meet the criteria set out above.

**IX. Citing in the Alternative.**

In rare cases, the same factual situation may present a possible violation of more than one standard.

**EXAMPLE 4-33:** The facts which support a violation of [§1910.28\(a\)\(1\)](#) may also support a violation of [§1910.132\(a\)](#), if no scaffolding is provided and the use of safety belts is not required by the employer.

Where it appears that more than one standard is applicable to a given factual situation and that compliance with any of the applicable standards would effectively eliminate the hazard, it is permissible to cite alternative standards using the words “in the alternative.” A reference in the citation to each of the standards involved shall be accompanied by a separate AVD that clearly alleges all of the necessary elements of a violation of that standard. Only one penalty shall be proposed for the violative condition.

**X. Combining and Grouping Violations.**

**A. Combining.**

Separate violations of a single standard, for example [§1910.212\(a\)\(3\)\(ii\)](#), having the same classification found during the inspection of an establishment or worksite generally shall be combined into one alleged citation item. Different options presented in the SAVEs of the same standard shall normally also be combined. Each instance of the violation shall be separately set out within that item of the citation.

*NOTE: Except for standards which deal with multiple hazards (e.g., [Tables Z-1](#), [Z-2](#) and [Z-3](#) cited under [§1910.1000](#) (a), (b), or (c)), the same standard may not normally be cited more than once on a single citation.*

*However, the same standard may be cited on different citations based on separate classifications and facts on the same inspection.*

**B. Grouping.**

When a source of a hazard is identified which involves interrelated violations of different standards, the violations may be grouped into a single violation. The following situations normally call for grouping violations:

**1. Grouping Related Violations.**

If violations classified either as serious or other than serious are so closely related they may constitute as a single hazardous condition, such violations shall be grouped and the overall classification shall normally be based on the most serious item.

**2. Grouping Other-than-Serious Violation Where Grouping Results in a Serious Violation.**

When two or more violations are found which, if considered individually, represent other than serious violations, but together create a substantial probability of death or serious physical harm, the violations shall be grouped as a serious violation.

**3. Where Grouping Results in High Gravity Other-than-Serious Violation.**

Where the inspector finds, during the course of the inspection, that a number of other-than-serious violations are present, the violations shall be considered in relation to each other to determine the overall gravity of possible injury resulting from an accident or incident involving the hazardous condition.

**4. Penalties for Grouped Violations.**

If penalties are to be proposed for grouped violations, the penalty shall be written across from the first violation item appearing on the Citation.

**C. When Not to Group or Combine.**

**1. Multiple Inspections.**

Violations discovered during multiple inspections of a single establishment or worksite may not be grouped. Where only one inspection report has been completed, an inspection at the same

establishment or worksite shall be considered a single inspection even if it continues for a period of more than one day, or is discontinued with the intention of later resuming it.

**2. Separate Establishments of the Same Employer.**

The employer shall be issued separate citations for each establishment or worksite where inspections are conducted, either simultaneously or at different times. If inspectors conduct inspections at two establishments belonging to the same employer and instances of the same violation are discovered during each inspection, the violations shall not be grouped.

**3. General Duty Clause.**

Because a General Duty Clause citation covers all aspects of a serious hazard where no standard exists, there shall be no grouping of separate violations. This policy, however, does not prohibit grouping a violation with a related violation of a specific standard.

**4. Egregious Violations.**

Violations, which are proposed as instance-by-instance citations, shall not normally be combined or grouped. See [CPL 02-00-080](#), *Handling of Cases to be Proposed for Violation-by-Violation Penalties*, dated October 21, 1990.

**XI. Health Standard Violations.**

**A. Citation of Ventilation Standards.**

In cases where a citation of a ventilation standard is appropriate, consideration shall be given to standards intended to control exposure to hazardous levels of air contaminants, prevent fire or explosions, or regulate operations that may involve confined spaces or specific hazardous conditions. In such cases, the following guidelines shall be observed:

**1. Health-Related Ventilation Standards.**

- a. Where an over-exposure to an airborne contaminant is present, the appropriate air contaminant engineering control requirement shall be cited; e.g., [§1910.1000\(e\)](#). Citations of this standard shall not be issued to require specific volumes of air to reduce such exposures.
- b. Other requirements contained in health-related ventilation standards shall be evaluated without regard to the concentration

of airborne contaminants. Where a specific standard has been violated and an actual or potential hazard has been documented, a citation shall be issued.

## 2. **Fire and Explosion-Related Ventilation Standards.**

Although not normally considered health violations, the following guidelines shall be observed when citing fire and explosion related ventilation standards:

### a. **Adequate Ventilation.**

An operation is considered to have **adequate** ventilation when **both** of the following criteria are present:

- The requirement(s) of the specific standard has been met.
- The concentration of flammable vapors is 25 percent or less of the lower explosive limit (LEL).

**EXCEPTION:** Some maritime standards require that levels be kept to 10 percent of the LEL (e.g. [§1915.36\(a\)](#)).

### b. **Citation Policy.**

If 25 percent (10 percent when specified for maritime operations) of the LEL has been exceeded and:

- The standard's requirements have not been met, violations of the applicable ventilation standard normally shall be cited as serious.
- If there is no applicable ventilation standard, the General Duty Clause shall be cited in accordance with the guidelines in Section III of this chapter, General Duty Requirement.

## B. **Violations of the Noise Standard.**

Current enforcement policy regarding [§1910.95\(b\)\(1\)](#) allows employers to rely on personal protective equipment and a hearing conservation program, rather than engineering and/or administrative controls, when hearing protectors will effectively attenuate the noise to which employees

are exposed to acceptable levels. (See Tables G-16 or G-16a of the standard).

1. Citations for violations of [§1910.95\(b\)\(1\)](#) shall be issued when technologically and economically feasible engineering and/or administrative controls have not been implemented; and
  - a. Employee exposure levels are so elevated that hearing protectors alone may not reliably reduce noise levels received to levels specified in Tables G-16 or G-16a of the standard. (e.g., Hearing protectors which offer the greatest attenuation may reliably be used to protect employees when their exposure levels border on 100 dBA). See [CPL 02-02-035](#), 29 *CFR* 1910.95(b)(1), *Guidelines for Noise Enforcement; Appendix A*, dated December 19, 1983; or
  - b. The costs of engineering and/or administrative controls are less than the cost of an effective hearing conservation program.
2. When an employer has an ongoing hearing conservation program and the results of audiometric testing indicate that existing controls and hearing protectors are adequately protecting employees, no additional controls may be necessary. In making this assessment, factors such as exposure levels present, number of employees tested, and duration of the testing program shall be considered.
3. When employee noise exposures are less than 100 dBA but the employer does not have an ongoing hearing conservation program, or results of audiometric testing indicate that the employer's existing program is inadequate, the inspector shall consider whether:
  - a. Reliance on an effective hearing conservation program would be less costly than engineering and/or administrative controls.
  - b. An effective hearing conservation program can be established or improvements made in an existing program which could bring the employer into compliance with Tables G-16 or G-16a.
  - c. Engineering and/or administrative controls are both technically and economically feasible.
4. If noise workplace levels can be reduced to the levels specified in Tables G-16 or 16a by means of hearing protectors along with an effective hearing conservation program, a citation for any missing

program elements shall be issued rather than for lack of engineering controls. If improvements in the hearing conservation program cannot be made or, if made, cannot reasonably be expected to reduce exposures, but feasible controls exist to address the hazard, then [§1910.95\(b\)\(1\)](#) shall be cited.

5. When hearing protection is required but not used and employee exposures exceed the limits of Table G-16, [§1910.95\(i\)\(2\)\(i\)](#) shall be cited and classified as serious (see (8), below) whether or not the employer has instituted a hearing conservation program. [§1910.95\(a\)](#) shall no longer be cited except in the case of the oil and gas drilling industry.

*NOTE: Citations of [§1910.95\(i\)\(2\)\(ii\)\(b\)](#) shall also be classified as serious.*

6. Where an employer has instituted a hearing conservation program and a violation of one or more elements (other than [§1910.95\(i\)\(2\)\(ii\)\(b\)](#) or [\(i\)\(2\)\(ii\)\(b\)](#)) is found, citations for the deficient elements of the noise standard shall be issued if exposures equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dB.
7. If an employer has not instituted a hearing conservation program and employee exposures equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dB, a citation for [§1910.95\(c\)](#) only shall be issued.
8. Violations of [§1910.95\(i\)\(2\)\(i\)](#) may be grouped with violations of [§1910.95\(b\)\(1\)](#) and classified as serious when employees are exposed to noise levels above the limits of Table G-16 and:
  - a. Hearing protection is not utilized or is not adequate to prevent overexposures; or
  - b. There is evidence of hearing loss that could reasonably be considered:
    - To be work-related, and
    - To have been preventable, if the employer had been in compliance with the cited provisions.
9. No citation shall be issued where, in the absence of feasible engineering or administrative controls, employees are exposed to elevated noise levels, but effective hearing protection is being



provided and used, and the employer has implemented a hearing conservation program.

## **XII. Violations of the Respiratory Protection Standard (§1910.134).**

If an inspection reveals the presence of potential respirator violations, [CPL 02-00-120](#), *Inspection Procedures for the Respiratory Protection Standard*, dated September 25, 1998, shall be used for guidance.

## **XIII. Violations of Air Contaminant Standards (§1910.1000).**

### **A. Requirements under the standard:**

1. [Section 1910.1000](#) (a) through (d) provides ceiling values and 8-hour time – weighted averages applicable to employee exposure to air contaminants.
2. [Section 1910.1000\(e\)](#) provides that to achieve compliance with those exposure limits, administrative or engineering controls shall first be identified and implemented to the extent feasible. When such controls do not achieve full compliance, personal protective equipment shall be used. Whenever respirators are used, their use shall comply with [§1910.134](#).
3. Section [§1910.134\(a\)](#) provides that when effective engineering controls are not feasible, or while they are being instituted, appropriate respirators shall be used.
4. There may be cases where workplace conditions require that employers provide engineering controls as well as administrative controls (including work practice controls) **and** personal protective equipment. [Section 1910.1000\(e\)](#) allows employers to implement feasible engineering controls and/or administrative and work practice controls in any combination, provided the selected abatement means eliminates the overexposure.
5. Where engineering and/or administrative controls are feasible but do not, or would not, reduce air contaminant levels below applicable ceiling values or threshold limit values, an employer must nevertheless institute such controls to reduce the exposure levels. In cases where the implementation of all feasible engineering and administrative controls fails to reduce the level of air contaminants below applicable levels, employers must additionally provide personal protective equipment to reduce exposures.

**B. Classification of Violations of Air Contaminant Standards.**

Where employees are exposed to a toxic substance in excess of the PEL established by IDOL-OSHA standards (without regard to the use of respirator protection), a citation for exceeding the air contaminant standard shall be issued. The violation shall be classified as serious or other-than-serious on the criteria set forth in the Chemical Sampling Information web page and based on whether respirators are being used. Classification of these violations is dependent upon the determination that an illness is reasonably predictable at the measured exposure level.

**1. Classification Considerations.**

Exposure to regulated substances shall be characterized as serious if exposures could cause impairment to the body as described in [Paragraph II.C.3.](#) of this chapter.

- a. In general, substances having a single health code of 13 or less shall be considered as posing a serious health hazard at any level above the Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL). Substances in categories 6, 8 and 12, however, are not considered serious at levels where only mild, temporary effects would be expected to occur.
- b. Substances causing irritation (i.e., categories 14 and 15) shall be considered other-than-serious up to levels at which "moderate" irritation could be expected.
- c. For a substance having multiple health codes covering both serious and other-than-serious effects (e.g., cyclohexanol), a classification of other-than-serious is appropriate up to levels where serious a health effect(s) could be expected to occur.
- d. For a substance having an ACGIH Threshold Limit Value (TLV) or a NIOSH recommended value, but no OSHA PEL, a citation for exposure in excess of the recommended value may be considered under the General Duty Clause. Prior to citing a General Duty Clause violation under these circumstances, it is essential that inspectors document that a *hazardous exposure* is occurring or has occurred at the workplace, not just that a recognized occupational exposure recommendation has been exceeded. See instructions in [Section III](#) of this chapter, *General Duty Requirements*.
- e. If an employee is exposed to concentrations of a substance below the PEL, but in excess of a recommended value (e.g.,

ACGIH TLV or NIOSH recommended value), citations will not normally be issued. Inspectors shall advise employers that a reduction of the PEL has been recommended.

*NOTE: An exception to this may apply if it can be documented that an employer knows that a particular safety or health standard fails to protect his workers against the specific hazard it is intended to address.*

- f. For a substance having an 8-hour PEL with no ceiling PEL but ACGIH or NIOSH has recommended a ceiling value, the case shall be referred to the Division Manager in accordance with this chapter. If no citation is issued, the inspector shall advise employers that a ceiling value is recommended.

## **2. Additive and Synergistic Effects.**

- a. Substances which have a known additive effect and, therefore, result in a greater probability/severity of risk when found in combination with each other shall be evaluated using the formula found in [§1910.1000\(d\)\(2\)](#). Use of this formula requires that exposures have an additive effect on the **same** body organ or system.
- b. If inspectors suspect that synergistic effects are possible they shall consult with their supervisor, who shall then refer the question to the Division Manager. If a synergistic effect of the cited substances is determined to be present, violations shall be grouped to accurately reflect severity and/or penalty.

## **XIV. Citing Improper Personal Hygiene Practices.**

The following guidelines apply when citing personal hygiene violations:

### **A. Ingestion Hazards.**

A citation under [§1910.141\(g\)\(2\)](#) and (4) shall be issued where there is reasonable probability that, in areas where employees consume food or beverages (including drinking fountains), a significant quantity of a toxic material may be ingested and subsequently absorbed.

1. For citations under [§1910.141\(g\)\(2\)](#) and (4), wipe sampling results shall be taken to establish the potential for a serious hazard.
2. Where, for any substance, a serious hazard is determined to exist due to potential for ingestion or absorption for reasons other than

the consumption of contaminated food or drink (e.g., smoking materials contaminated with the toxic substance), a serious citation shall be considered under the General Duty Clause.

**B. Absorption Hazards.**

A citation for exposure to materials that may be absorbed through the skin or can cause a skin effect (e.g., dermatitis) shall be issued where appropriate personal protective clothing is necessary, but is not provided or worn. If a serious skin absorption or dermatitis hazard exists that cannot be eliminated with protective clothing, a General Duty Clause citation may be considered. Engineering or administrative (including work practice) controls may be required in these cases to prevent the hazard. See [§1910.132\(a\)](#).

**C. Wipe Sampling.**

In general, wipe samples, not measurements for air concentrations, will be necessary to establish the presence of a toxic substance posing a potential absorption or ingestion hazard. (See [TED 01-00-015](#), *OSHA Technical Manual*, dated January 20, 1999, for sampling procedures.)

**D. Citation Policy.**

The following criteria should be considered prior to issuing a citation for ingestion or absorption hazards:

1. A health risk exists as demonstrated by one of the following:
  - a. A potential for an illness, such as dermatitis, and/or
  - b. The presence of a toxic substance that may be potentially ingested or absorbed through the skin. (See the [Chemical Sampling Information](#) web page.)
2. The potential for employee exposure by ingestion or absorption may be established by taking both qualitative and quantitative wipe samples. The substance must be present on surfaces that employees contact (such as lunch tables, water fountains, work areas etc.) or on other surfaces, which, if contaminated, present the potential for ingestion or absorption.
3. The sampling results must reveal that the substance has properties and exists in quantities that pose a serious hazard.

**XV. Biological Monitoring.**

If an employer has been conducting biological monitoring, inspectors shall evaluate the results of such testing. These results may assist in determining whether a significant quantity of the toxic substance is being ingested or absorbed through the skin.

## **Chapter 5**

### **CASE FILE PREPARATION AND DOCUMENTATION**

#### **I. Introduction.**

These instructions are provided to assist inspectors in determining the minimum level of written documentation necessary in preparation of an inspection case file. All necessary information relative to documentation of violations shall be obtained during the inspection, (including but not limited to notes, audio/videotapes, photographs, employer and employee interviews and employer maintained records). Inspectors shall develop detailed information for the case file to establish the specific elements of each violation.

Inspectors and Enforcement Assistant Managers shall follow all procedures, when an inspection involves important or novel facts or presents potentially complex litigation issues. If legal consultation is necessary, it shall be conducted at the earliest possible stage of the inspection.

#### **II. Inspection Conducted, Citations Being Issued.**

All case files must include the following forms and documents.

##### **A. Inspection Report.**

The inspector shall obtain available information to complete the Inspection Report and other appropriate forms.

##### **B. Inspection Narrative Report.**

The Inspection Narrative Report shall list the following:

1. Establishment Name;
2. Inspection Number;
3. Additional Citation Mailing Addresses;
4. Names and Addresses of all Organized Employee Groups;
5. Names, Addresses and Phone Numbers of Authorized Representatives of Employees;
6. Employer Representatives contacted and the extent of their participation in the inspection;

7. Inspector's evaluation of the Employer's Safety and Health System, and if applicable, a discussion of any penalty reduction for good faith;
8. A written narrative containing accurate and concise information about the employer and the worksite;
9. Date the closing conference(s) was held and description of any unusual circumstances encountered;
10. Any other relevant comments/information that inspectors believe may be helpful, based on his/her professional judgment;
11. Names, Addresses and Phone Numbers of other persons contacted during the inspection, such as the police, coroner, attorney, etc.;
12. Names and Job Titles of any individuals who accompanied the inspector on the inspection;
13. Calculation of the DART rate (at least three full calendar years and the current year);
14. Discussion clearly addressing all items on the Complaint or Referral;
15. Type of Legal Entity [Indicate whether the employer is a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, etc. (Do not use the word "owner.") If the employer named is a subsidiary of another firm, indicate that.]; and
16. Coverage Information.

**C. Violation Worksheet.**

1. A separate Violation Worksheet should normally be completed for each alleged violation. Describe the observed hazardous conditions or practices, including all relevant facts, and all information pertaining to how and/or why a standard is violated. Specifically identify the hazard to which employees have been or could be exposed. Describe the type of injury or illness which the violated standard was designed to prevent in this situation, or note the name and exposure level of any contaminant or harmful physical agent to which employees are, have been, or could be potentially exposed. If employee exposure was not actually observed during the inspection, state the facts on which the determination was made (i.e., tools left inside an unprotected

trench) that an employee has been or could have been exposed to a safety or health hazard.

2. The following information shall be documented:
  - a. Explanation of the hazard(s) or hazardous condition(s);
  - b. Identification of the machinery or equipment (such as equipment type, manufacturer, model number, serial number);
  - c. Specific location of the hazard and employee exposure to the hazard;
  - d. Injury or illness likely to result from exposure to the hazard;
  - e. Employee proximity to the hazard and specific measurements taken, (describe how measurements were taken, identify the measuring techniques and equipment used, identify those who were present and observed the measurements being made, include calibration dates of equipment used);
  - f. For contaminants and physical agents, any additional facts that clarify the nature of employee exposure. A representative number of Material Safety Data Sheets should be collected for hazardous chemicals that employees may potentially be exposed to;
  - g. Names, addresses, phone numbers, and job titles for exposed employees;
  - h. Approximate duration of time the hazard has existed and frequency of exposure to the hazard;
  - i. Employer knowledge;
  - j. Any and all facts which establish that the employer actually knew of the hazardous condition, or what reasonable steps the employer failed to take (including regular inspections of the worksite) that could have revealed the presence of the hazardous condition. The mere presence of the employer in the workplace is not sufficient evidence of knowledge. There must be evidence that demonstrates why the employer reasonably could have recognized the presence of the hazardous condition. Avoid relying on conclusion-drawing statements such as “reasonable diligence” to establish employer knowledge.



- In order to establish that a violation may be potentially classified as willful, facts shall be documented to show either that the employer knew of the applicable legal requirements and intentionally violated them or that the employer showed plain indifference to employee safety or health (See *Willful Violations*). For example, document facts that the employer knew that the condition existed and that the employer was required to take additional steps to abate the hazard. Such evidence could include prior IDOL citations, previous warnings by an inspector, insurance company or city/state inspector regarding the requirements of the standard(s), the employer's familiarity with the standard(s), contract specifications requiring compliance with applicable standards, or warnings by employees or employee safety representatives of the presence of a hazardous condition and what protections are required by IDOL-OSHA standards.
  - Also include facts showing that even if the employer was not consciously or intentionally violating the Act(s), the employer acted with such plain indifference for employee safety that had the employer known of the standard, it probably would not have complied anyway. This type of evidence would include instances where an employer was aware of an employee exposure to an obviously hazardous condition(s) and made no reasonable effort to eliminate it.
  - Any relevant comments made by the employer or employee during the walk-around or closing conference, including any employer comments regarding why it violated the standard, which may be characterized as admissions of the specific violations described; and
- k. Include any other facts, which may assist in evaluating the situation or in reconstructing the total inspection picture in preparation for testimony in possible legal actions.
- l. Appropriate and consistent abatement dates should be assigned and documented for abatement periods longer than 30 days. The abatement period shall be the shortest interval within which the employer can reasonably be expected to correct the violation. An abatement period should be indicated in the citation as a specific date, not a number of days. When

abatement is witnessed by the inspector during an inspection, the abatement period shall be listed on the citation as “Corrected During Inspection.”

- m. The establishment of the shortest practicable abatement date requires the exercise of professional judgment on the part of the inspector. Abatement periods exceeding 30 days shall not normally be offered, particularly for simple safety violations. Situations may arise, however, especially for complex health or program violations, where abatement cannot be completed within 30 days (e.g., ventilation equipment needs to be installed, new parts or equipment need to be ordered, delivered and installed or a process hazard analysis needs to be performed as part of a PSM program). When an initial abatement date is granted that is in excess of 30 calendar days, the reason should be documented in the case file.
- 3. Records obtained during the course of the inspection which the inspector determines are necessary to support the violations.
- 4. For violations classified as repeated, the file shall include a copy of the previous citation(s) on which the repeat classification is based and documentation of the final order date of the original citation.

### **III. Inspection Conducted But No Citations Issued.**

For inspections that do not result in citations being issued, a lesser amount of documentation may be included in the case file. At a minimum, the case file shall include the Inspection Report, the Inspection Narrative Worksheet, and statement copy of a No Violation letter that at the time of the inspection no conditions were observed in violation of any standard that was sent to employer and appropriate parties.

### **IV. No Inspection.**

For “No Inspections,” the inspector shall include in the case file an Inspection Report, which indicates the reason why no inspection was conducted. If there was a denial of entry, the information necessary to obtain a warrant or an explanation of why a warrant is not being sought shall be included. The case file shall also include a complaint/referral response letter, if appropriate, which explains why an inspection was not conducted.

## **V. Health Inspections.**

### **A. Document Potential Exposure.**

In addition to the documentation indicated above, inspectors shall document all relevant information concerning potential exposure(s) to chemical substances or physical agents (including, as appropriate, collection and evaluation of applicable Material Safety Data Sheets), such as symptoms experienced by employees, duration and frequency of exposures to the hazard, employee interviews, sources of potential health hazards, types of engineering or administrative controls implemented by the employer, and personal protective equipment being provided by the employer and used by employees.

### **B. Employer's Occupational Safety and Health System.**

Inspectors shall request and evaluate information on the following aspects of the employer's occupational safety and health system as it relates to the scope of the inspection:

#### **1. Monitoring.**

The employer's system for monitoring safety and health hazards in the establishment should include a program for self-inspection. Inspectors shall discuss the employer's maintenance schedules and inspection records. Additional information shall be obtained concerning activities such as sampling and calibration procedures, ventilation measurements, preventive maintenance procedures for engineering controls, and laboratory services. Compliance with the monitoring requirements of any applicable substance-specific health standards shall be determined.

#### **2. Medical.**

Inspectors shall determine whether the employer provides the employees with pre-placement and periodic medical examinations. The medical examination protocol shall be requested to determine the extent of the medical examinations and, if applicable, compliance with the medical surveillance requirements of any applicable substance-specific health standards.

#### **3. Records Program.**

Inspectors shall determine the extent of the employer's records program, such as whether records pertaining to employee exposure and medical records are being maintained in accordance with [§1910.1020](#).

4. **Engineering Controls.**

Inspectors shall identify any engineering controls present, including substitution, isolation, general dilution and local exhaust ventilation, and equipment modification.

5. **Work Practice and Administrative Controls.**

Inspectors shall identify any control techniques, including personal hygiene, housekeeping practices, employee job rotation, employee training and education. Rotation of employees as an administrative control requires employer knowledge of the extent and duration of exposure.

*NOTE: Employee rotation is not permitted as a control under some standards.*

6. **Personal Protective Equipment.**

An effective personal protective equipment program should exist at the workplace. A detailed evaluation of the program shall be documented to determine compliance with specific standards, such as, §§ [1910.95](#), [1910.134](#), and [1910.132](#).

7. **Regulated Areas.**

Inspectors shall investigate compliance with the requirements for regulated areas as specified by certain standards. Regulated areas must be clearly identified and known to all appropriate employees. The regulated area designation must be maintained according to the prescribed criteria of the applicable standard.

8. **Emergency Action Plan.**

Inspectors shall evaluate the employer's emergency action plan when such a plan is required by a specific standard. When standards provide that specific emergency procedures be developed where certain hazardous substances are handled, inspector's evaluation shall determine if: potential emergency conditions are included in the written plan, emergency conditions are explained to employees and there is a training program for the protection of affected employees, including use and maintenance of personal protective equipment.

## **VI. Affirmative Defenses.**

An affirmative defense is a claim which, if established by the employer and found to exist by the inspector, will excuse the employer from a citation that has otherwise been documented.

### **A. Burden of Proof.**

Although employers have the burden of proving any affirmative defenses at the time of a hearing, inspectors must anticipate when an employer is likely to raise an argument supporting such a defense. Inspectors shall keep in mind all potential affirmative defenses and attempt to gather contrary evidence, particularly when an employer makes an assertion that would indicate raising a defense/excuse against the violation(s). Inspectors shall bring all documentation of hazards and facts related to possible affirmative defenses to the attention of the Division Manager.

### **B. Explanations.**

The following are explanations of common affirmative defenses.

1. **Unpreventable Employee or Supervisory Misconduct or “Isolated Event.”**
  - a. To establish this defense in most jurisdictions, employers must show all the following elements:
    - A work rule adequate to prevent the violation;
    - Effective communication of the rule to employees;
    - Methods for discovering violations of work rules; and
    - Effective enforcement of rules when violations are discovered.
  - b. Inspectors shall document whether these elements are present, including if the work rule at issue tracks the requirements of the standard addressing the hazardous condition.

**EXAMPLE 5-1:** An unguarded table saw is observed. The saw, however, has a guard which is reattached while the inspector watches. Facts to be documented include:

- Who removed the guard and why?

- Did the employer know that the guard had been removed?
- How long or how often had the saw been used without the guard?
- Were there any supervisors in the area while the saw was operated without a guard?
- Did the employer have a work rule that the saw only be operated with the guard on?
- How was the work rule communicated to employees?
- Did the employer monitor compliance with the rule?
- How was the work rule enforced by the employer when it found noncompliance?

## 2. **Impossibility/Infeasibility of Compliance.**

Compliance with the requirements of a standard is impossible or would prevent performance of required work **and the employer took reasonable alternative steps to protect employees or there are no alternative means of employee protection available.**

**EXAMPLE 5-2:** An unguarded table saw is observed. The employer states that a guard would interfere with the nature of the work. Facts to be documented include:

- Would a guard make performance of the work impossible or merely more difficult?
- Could a guard be used some of the time or for some of the operations?
- Has the employer attempted to use a guard?
- Has the employer considered any alternative means of avoiding or reducing the hazard?

## 3. **Greater Hazard.**

Compliance with a standard would result in a greater hazard(s) to employees than would noncompliance **and** the employer took reasonable alternative protective measures, or there are no

alternative means of employee protection. Additionally, an application for a variance would be inappropriate.

**EXAMPLE 5-3:** The employer indicates that a saw guard had been removed because it caused the operator to be struck in the face by particles thrown from the saw. Facts to be documented include:

- Was the guard initially properly installed and used?
- Would a different type of guard eliminate the problem?
- How often was the operator struck by particles and what kind of injuries resulted?
- Would personal protective equipment such as safety glasses or a face shield worn by the employee solve the problem?
- Was the operator's work practice causing the problem and did the employer attempt to correct the problem?
- Was a variance requested?

## **VII. Interview Statements.**

### **A. Generally.**

Interview statements of employees or other individuals shall be obtained to adequately document a potential violation. Statements shall normally be in writing and the individual shall be encouraged to sign and date the statement. During management interviews, inspectors are encouraged to take verbatim, contemporaneous notes whenever possible as these tend to be more credible than later general recollections.

### **B. Inspectors shall obtain written statements when:**

1. There is an actual or potential controversy as to any material facts concerning a violation;
2. A conflict or difference among employee statements as to the facts arises;
3. There is a potential willful or repeated violation; and
4. In accident investigations, when attempting to determine if potential violations existed at the time of the accident.

**C. Language and Wording of Statement.**

Interview statements shall normally be written in the first person and in the language of the individual when feasible. (Statements taken in a language other than English shall be subsequently translated.) The wording of the statement shall be understandable to the individual and reflect only the information that has been brought out in the interview. The individual shall initial any changes or corrections to the statement; otherwise, the statement shall not be modified, added to or altered in any way. The statement shall end with the wording: "I have read the above, or the statement has been read to me, and it is true to the best of my knowledge." Where appropriate, the statement shall also include the following: "I request that my statement be held confidential to the extent allowed by law." Only the individual interviewed may later waive the confidentiality of the statement. The individual shall sign and date the interview statement and the inspector shall sign it as a witness.

**D. Refusal to Sign Statement.**

If the individual refuses to sign the statement, the inspector shall note such refusal on the statement. Statements shall be read to the individual and an attempt made to obtain an agreement. A note to this effect shall be documented in the case file. Recorded statements shall be transcribed whenever possible.

**E. Video and Audiotaped Statements.**

Interview statements may be videotaped or audiotaped, with the consent of the person being interviewed. The statement shall be reduced to writing in egregious, fatality/catastrophe, willful, repeated, failure to abate, and other significant cases so that it may be signed. Inspectors are encouraged to produce the written statement for correction and signature as soon as possible, and identify the transcriber.

**F. Administrative Depositions.**

When necessary to document or develop investigative facts, a management official or other individual may be administratively deposed. *See Interviews of Non-Managerial Employees, for additional guidance regarding interviews of non-managerial employees.*



## **VIII. Paperwork and Written Program Requirements.**

In certain cases, violations of standards requiring employers to have a written program to address a hazard or make a written certification (e. g., hazard communication, personal protective equipment, permit required confined spaces and others) are considered paperwork deficiencies. However, in some circumstances, violations of such standards may have an adverse impact on employee safety and health. See [CPL 02-00-111](#), *Citation Policy for Paperwork and Written Program Requirement Violations*.

## **IX. Guidelines for Case File Documentation for Use with Videotapes and Audiotapes.**

The use of videotaping as a method of documenting violations and of gathering evidence for inspection case files is encouraged. Certain types of inspections, such as fatalities, imminent danger and ergonomics shall include videotaping. Other methods of documentation, such as handwritten notes, audiotaping, and photographs, continue to be acceptable and are encouraged to be used whenever they add to the quality of the evidence and whenever videotaping equipment is not available. See [CPL 02-00-098](#), *Guidelines for Case File Documentation for use with Videotapes and Audiotapes*, dated October 12, 1993.

## **X. Case File Activity Diary Sheet.**

All case files shall contain an activity diary sheet, which is designed to provide a ready record and summary of all actions relating to a case. It will be used to document important events or actions related to the case, especially those not noted elsewhere in the case file. Diary entries should be clear, concise and legible and should be dated in chronological order to reflect a timeline of the case development. Information provided should include, at a minimum, the date of the action or event, a brief description of the action or event and the initials of the person making the entry. The case file will be organized in a manner consistent with IDOL policy. See case file management table on page 5-17.

## **XI. Citations.**

Section 2.3 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act addresses the form and issuance of citations.

Section 2.3 provides: "Each citation shall be in writing; describe with particularity the nature of the violation and include a reference to the provision of the Act, standard, rule, regulation, or order alleged to have been violated; and fix a reasonable time for the abatement of the violation."

A. **Statute of Limitations.**

Section 2.3 provides. "...No citation may be issued under this Section after the expiration of 6 months following the occurrence of any violation." In some cases, particularly those involving fatalities or accidents, the six-month period begins to run from the date of the incident, not from the opening conference date.

B. **Issuing Citations.**

1. Citations shall be sent by certified mail. Hand delivery of citations to the employer or an appropriate agent of the employer, or use of a mail delivery service other than the United States Postal Service, may be used **in addition** to certified mail if it is believed that these methods would effectively give the employer notice of the citation. A signed receipt shall be obtained whenever possible. The circumstances of delivery shall be documented in the diary sheet.
2. Citations shall be mailed to employee representatives after the Certified Mail Receipt card is received. Citations shall also be mailed to any employee upon request and without the need to make a written request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). In the case of a fatality, the family of the victim shall be provided with a copy of the citations without charge or the need to make a written request.

C. **Amending/Withdrawing Citations and Notification of Penalties.**

1. **Amendment Justification.**

Amendments to, or withdrawal of, a citation shall be made when information is presented to the Division Manager or designee, which indicates a need for such action and may include administrative or technical errors such as:

- a. Citation of an incorrect standard;
- b. Incorrect or incomplete description of the alleged violation;
- c. Additional facts not available to the inspector at the time of the inspection establish a valid affirmative defense;
- d. Additional facts not available to the inspector at the time of the inspection establish that there was no employee exposure to the hazard; or

- e. Additional facts establish a need for modification of the abatement date or the penalty, or reclassification of citation items.

2. **When Amendment is not Appropriate.**

Amendments to, or withdrawal of, a citation shall not be made by the Division Manager or designee for any of the following:

- a. Timely Notice of Contest received;
- b. The 15 working days for filing a Notice of Contest has expired and the citation has become a Final Order; or
- c. Employee representatives were not given the opportunity to present their views (unless the revision involves only an administrative or technical error).

D. **Procedures for Amending or Withdrawing Citations.**

The following procedures apply whenever amending or withdrawing citations.

*NOTE: The instructions contained in this section, with appropriate modifications, are also applicable to the amendment of the Notification of Failure to Abate Alleged Violation.*

- 1. Withdrawal of, or modifications to, the citation and notification of penalty, shall normally be accomplished by means of Informal or Formal Settlement Agreements.
- 2. In exceptional circumstances, the Division Manager or designee may initiate a change to a citation and notification of penalty without an informal conference. If proposed amendments to citation items (individual violations) change the original classification of the items, such as willful to repeated, the original items shall be withdrawn and the new, appropriate items will be issued. The amended Citation and Notification of Penalty Form shall clearly indicate that the employer is obligated under the Act(s) to post the amendment to the citation along with the original citation, until the amended violation has been corrected, or for three working days, whichever is longer.
- 3. The 15 working day contest period for the amended portions of the citation will begin on the day following the day of receipt of the amended Citation and Notification of Penalty.

4. The contest period is not extended for the unamended portions of the original citation. A copy of the original citation shall be attached to the amended Citation and Notification of Penalty Form when the amended form is forwarded to the employer.
5. When circumstances warrant, the Division Manager or designee may withdraw a citation and notification of penalty in its entirety. Justification for the withdrawal must be noted in the case file. A letter withdrawing the Citation and Notification of Penalty shall be sent to the employer. The letter, signed by the Division Manager or designee, shall refer to the original citation and notification of penalty, state that they are withdrawn and direct that the employer post the letter for three working days in the same location(s) where the original citation was posted. When applicable, a copy of the letter shall also be sent to the employee representative(s) and/or complainant.

## **XII. Inspection Records.**

### **A. Generally.**

1. Inspection records are any record made by an inspector that concern, relate to, or are part of, any inspection, or are a part of the performance of any official duty.
2. All official forms and notes constituting the basic documentation of a case must be part of the case file. All original field notes are part of the inspection record and shall be maintained in the file. Inspection records also include photographs (including digital photographs), negatives of photographs, videotapes, DVDs and audiotapes. Inspection records are the property of the State of Illinois and not the property of the inspector and are not to be retained or used for any private purpose.

### **B. Release of Inspection Information.**

The information obtained during inspections is confidential, but may be disclosable or non-disclosable based on criteria established in the Freedom of Information Act. Requests for release of inspection information shall be directed to the Division Manager.

### **C. Classified and Trade Secret Information.**

1. Any classified or trade secret information and/or personal knowledge of such information by agency personnel shall be handled in accordance with IDOL-OSHA regulations. Trade Secrets are matters that are not of public or general knowledge. A

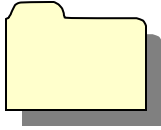
trade secret, includes information concerning or related to processes, operations, style of work, or apparatus, or to the identity, confidential statistical data, amount or source of any income, profits, losses, or expenditures of any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or association. The collection of such information and the number of personnel with access to it shall be limited to the minimum necessary for the conduct of investigative activities. Inspectors shall specifically identify any classified and trade secret information in the case file.

2. It is essential to the effective enforcement of the Act(s) that inspectors and all IDOL personnel preserve the confidentiality of all information and investigations which might reveal a trade secret. When the employer identifies an operation or condition as a trade secret, it shall be treated as such. Information obtained in such areas, including all negatives, photographs, videotapes and documentation forms shall be labeled:

“ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION”  
“RESTRICTED TRADE INFORMATION”

3. All information reported to or obtained by inspectors in connection with any inspection or other activity which contains or may reveal a trade secret shall be kept confidential. Such information shall not be disclosed except to other IDOL officials concerned with the enforcement of the Act(s) or, when relevant, in any proceeding under the Act(s).
4. Trade secret materials shall not be labeled as “Top Secret,” “Secret,” or “Confidential,” nor shall these security classification designations be used in conjunction with other words, unless the trade secrets are also classified by an agency of the U. S. Government in the interest of national security.
5. If the employer objects to the taking of photographs and/or videotapes because trade secrets would or may be disclosed, inspectors should advise employers of the protection against such disclosure. If the employer still objects, inspectors shall contact the Division Manager for guidance. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.100]

## Case File Management



555123 Village of IDOL-Village Hall

Appendix A	DIARY SHEET	
Appendix B	INSPECTION DOCUMENTS & NARRATIVE	
		OIS Inspection Report & Narrative
Appendix C	PHOTOS	
Appendix D	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	
		Correspondence (i.e., emails)
		Field Notes
		Interviews & Statements
		Other (i.e., manuals, written plans, records)
		Sampling Forms and Results
Appendix E	CITATION & NOTIFICATION OF PENALTY	
Appendix F	ABATEMENT CERTIFICATION & DOCUMENTATION	
Appendix Y	COMPLAINT OR REFERRAL FORMS	
Appendix Z	FATALITY OR CATASTROPHE FORMS	Check List Event Form Investigation Summary
Letters		

## Chapter 6

### PENALTIES AND DEBT COLLECTION

#### I. General Penalty Policy.

The penalty structure in Section 2.3 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act is used on a very limited basis to provide an incentive for preventing or correcting violations that the employer failed to abate. While penalties are not designed as punishment for violations, the penalty amounts should be sufficient to serve as an effective deterrent to the most severe of violations.

#### II. Civil Penalties.

##### A. Statutory Authority for Civil Penalties.

Section 2.3 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act provides the Director with the statutory authority to propose civil penalties for violations of the Acts. **Proposed penalties** are the penalty amounts IDOL issues with the citation(s).

1. Section 2.3 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act provides that any employer who willfully or repeatedly violates the Act(s) may be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 for each violation.
2. Section 2.3 provides that any employer who has received a citation for an alleged violation of the Act(s) which is determined to be of a serious nature may be assessed a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 for each violation.
3. Section 2.3 provides that, when the violation is specifically determined not to be of a serious nature, a proposed civil penalty of up to \$1,000 may be assessed for each violation.
4. Section 2.3 provides that any employer who fails to correct a violation for which a citation has been issued, may be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$1,000 for each day during which such failure or violation continues.
5. Section 2.6 provides that, when a violation of a posting requirement is cited, a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 may be assessed for each violation.

### III. Gravity of Violation.

The gravity of the violation can be used as a **consideration** in determining penalty amounts. To determine the gravity of a violation, the following two assessments shall be made:

- ▶ The **severity** of the injury or illness which could result from the alleged violation.
- ▶ The **probability** that an injury or illness could occur as a result of the alleged violation.

#### A. Severity Assessment.

The classification of an alleged violation as serious or other-than-serious is based on the severity of the potential injury or illness and is the first step. The following categories shall be considered in assessing the severity of potential injuries or illnesses:

##### 1. For Serious:

- **High Severity:** Death from injury or illness; injuries involving permanent disability; or chronic, irreversible illnesses.
- **Medium Severity:** Injuries or temporary, reversible illnesses resulting in hospitalization or a variable but limited period of disability.
- **Low Severity:** Injuries or temporary, reversible illnesses not resulting in hospitalization and requiring only minor supportive treatment.

##### 2. For Other-Than-Serious:

**Minimal Severity:** Although such violations reflect conditions which have a direct and immediate relationship to the safety and health of employees, the most serious injury or illness that could reasonably be expected to result from an employee's exposure would not be low, medium or high severity and would not cause death or serious physical harm.

#### B. Probability Assessment.



The probability that an injury or illness will result from a hazard has no role in determining the classification of a violation, but does affect the amount of the proposed penalty.

1. Probability shall be categorized either as greater or as lesser.
  - **Greater Probability:** Results when the likelihood that an injury or illness will occur is judged to be relatively high.
  - **Lesser Probability:** Results when the likelihood that an injury or illness will occur is judged to be relatively low.

## 2. **How to Determine Probability.**

The following factors shall be considered, as appropriate, when violations are likely to result in injury or illness:

- Number of employees exposed;
- Frequency of exposure or duration of employee overexposure to contaminants;
- Employee proximity to the hazardous conditions;
- Use of appropriate personal protective equipment;
- Medical surveillance program;
- Youth and inexperience of employees, especially those under 18 years old; and
- Other pertinent working conditions.

**EXAMPLE 6-1:** Greater probability may include an employee exposed to the identified hazard for four hours a day, five days a week. Lesser probability may be present when an employee is performing a non-routine task with two previous exposures within the previous year and no injuries or illnesses are associated with the identified hazard.

## 3. **Final Probability Assessment.**

All of the factors outlined above shall be considered in determining a final probability assessment.

When adherence to the probability assessment procedures would result in an unreasonably high or low gravity, the assessment may be adjusted at the discretion of the Enforcement Assistant Manager as appropriate. Such decisions shall be fully explained in the case file.

**C. Penalty Reduction Factors.**

**1. General.**

- a. Penalty reductions may exceed 100 percent, depending upon the employer's "size" (number of employees), "good faith," and "history of previous violations."
  - A maximum of 60 percent (80 percent for serious willful violations) reduction is permitted for **size**;
  - A maximum of 35 percent reduction for **good faith**; and
  - 10 percent reduction may be given for **history**.
- b. However, no penalty reduction can be more than 100 percent of the initial assessment. Since these reduction factors are based on the general character of an employer's safety and health performance, they shall be calculated only once for each employer.
- c. After the classification and the penalty have been determined for each violation, the penalty reduction factors (for size, good faith, history) shall be applied subject to the following limitations:
  - Penalties proposed for violations classified as **repeated** shall be reduced only for size.
  - Penalties proposed for violations classified as **willful**, shall be reduced only for size and history.
  - Penalties proposed for **serious** violations classified as high severity/greater probability **shall be reduced only for size and history**.

2. **Size Reduction.**

- a. A maximum penalty reduction of 60 percent is permitted for small employers. "Size of employer" shall be calculated on the basis of the maximum number of employees of an employer at **all** workplaces statewide at any one time during the previous 12 months.
- b. The rates of reduction to be applied are as follows.

<u>Employees</u>	<u>Percent reduction</u>
1-25	60
26-100	40
101-250	20
251 or more	None

3. **Good Faith Reduction.**

A penalty reduction is permitted in recognition of an employer's effort to implement an effective safety and health management system in the workplace. The following apply to reductions for good faith:

- a. **Reduction Not Permitted.**
  - No reduction shall be given if a **willful violation** is found. Additionally, where a willful violation has been documented, no reduction for good faith can be applied to **any** of the violations found during the same inspection.
  - No reduction shall be given for **repeated violations**. If a repeated violation is found, no reduction for good faith can be applied to **any** of the violations found during the same inspection.
  - No reduction shall be given if a **failure to abate violation** is found during an inspection. No good faith reduction shall be given for any violation in the inspection in which the FTA was found.

- No reduction shall be given to employers being cited under abatement verification for **failure to certify abatement**.
- No reduction shall be given to employers being cited under abatement verification for **failure to notify employees and tagging movable equipment**.
- No reduction shall be given if the employer has **no safety and health management system**, or if there are **major deficiencies** in the program.

b. **Twenty-Five Percent Reduction.**

A 25 percent reduction for “good faith” normally requires a written safety and health management system. In exceptional cases, Inspectors may recommend a full 25 percent reduction for employers with 1-25 employees who have implemented an effective safety and health management system, but has not reduced it to writing.

To qualify for this reduction, the employer’s safety and health management system must provide for:

- Appropriate management commitment and employee involvement;
- Worksite analysis for the purpose of hazard identification;
- Hazard prevention and control measures;
- Safety and health training; and
- Where **young persons** (i.e., less than 18 years old) are employed, the Inspector’s evaluation must consider whether the employer’s safety and health management system appropriately addresses the particular needs of such employees, relative to the types of work they perform and the potential hazards to which they may be exposed.
- Where **persons who speak limited or no English** are employed, the Inspector’s evaluation must consider whether the employer’s safety and health management system appropriately addresses the particular needs of

such employees, relative to the types of work they perform and the potential hazards to which they may be exposed.

*NOTE: One example of an effective safety and health management system is given in Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines; Issuance of Voluntary Guidelines (Federal Register, January 16, 1989 ([54 FR 3904](#))).*

**c. Fifteen Percent Reduction.**

A 15 percent reduction for good faith shall normally be given if the employer has a documented and effective safety and health management system, with only incidental deficiencies.

**EXAMPLE 6-2:** An acceptable program should include minutes of employee safety and health meetings, documented employee safety and health training sessions, or any other evidence of measures advancing safety and health in the workplace.

**d. Allowable Percentages.**

Only these percentages (15%, 25% or 35%) may be used to reduce penalties due to the employer's good faith.

**4. History Reduction.**

**a. Allowable Percent.**

A reduction of 10 percent shall be given to employers who have not been cited for any serious, willful, or repeated violations in the prior three years.

**b. Time Limitation and Final Order.**

The three-year history of no prior citations shall be calculated from the opening conference date of the current inspection. Only citations that have become a final order within the three years immediately before the opening conference date shall be considered.

**c. Reduction Will Not be Given.**

- For a repeated violation, or

- To employers being cited for failure to certify abatement, or
- To employers being cited for failure to notify employees and tagging movable equipment.

#### 5. **Total Reduction.**

The total reduction will normally be the sum of the reductions for each factor.

### IV. **Repeated Violations.**

#### **General.**

Each repeated violation shall be evaluated as serious or other-than-serious, based on current workplace conditions, and not on hazards found in the prior case.

*NOTE: Section 2.3 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act provides that an employer who repeatedly violates the Act(s) may be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 for each violation.*

### V. **Willful Violations.**

Section 2.3 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act provides that an employer who willfully violates the Act may be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 for each violation.

#### **General.**

1. Each willful violation shall be classified as serious or other-than-serious.
2. In no case shall the proposed penalty for a willful violation (serious or other-than-serious) after reductions be less than \$1,000.

### VI. **Penalties for Failure to Abate.**

#### **General.**

1. Failure to Abate penalties shall be proposed when:

- a. A previous citation issued to an employer has become a final order ; and
  - b. The condition, hazard or practice found upon re-inspection is the same for which the employer was originally cited and has never been corrected by the employer (i.e., the violation was continuous).
2. The citation has to have become a final order. Citations become a final order when the abatement date for that item passes, if the employer has not filed a notice of contest prior to that abatement date.
3. See *Legal Issues*, for information on determining final dates of uncontested citations, settlements and decisions.

## **VII. Penalty and Citation Policy for Administrative Rule Requirements.**

Section 2.6 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act provides that any employer who violates any of the posting requirements shall be assessed a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 for each violation (this includes recordkeeping violations). [CPL 02-00-111](#), *Citation Policy for Paperwork and Written Program Requirement Violations*, issued November 27, 1995.

### **A. Posting Requirements.**

Penalties for violation of posting requirements shall be proposed as follows:

#### **1. Failure to Post the IDOL Notice (Poster).**

A citation for failure to post the IDOL Notice is warranted if:

- a. The pattern of violative conditions for a particular establishment demonstrates a consistent disregard for the employer's responsibilities under the Safety Inspection and Education Act and the Health and Safety Act; AND
- b. Interviews show that employees are unaware of their rights under the Acts; OR
- c. The employer has been previously cited or advised by IDOL of the posting requirement.

If the criteria above are met and the employer has not displayed (posted) the notice furnished by the Illinois Department of Labor, an other-than-serious citation shall normally be issued. The penalty for this alleged violation may be \$1,000.

**2. Failure to Post a Citation**

- a. If an employer received a citation that was not posted an other-than-serious citation shall normally be issued.
- b. For information regarding the OSHA-300A form, see [CPL 02-00-135](#), *Recordkeeping Policies and Procedures Manual*, December 30, 2004.

**B. Advance Notice of Inspection**

When an employer has received advance notice of an inspection and fails to notify the authorized employee representative as required, an other-than-serious citation shall be issued.

**C. Abatement Verification Regulation Violations**

**1. Failing to Certify Abatement.**

- a. An other-than-serious citation for failing to submit abatement certification documents shall normally be issued.

**D. Injury and Illness Records and Reporting.**

An other-than-serious citation for Recordkeeping violations shall normally be issued.

**VIII. Failure to Provide Access to Medical and Exposure Records – §1910.1020.**

**A. Proposed Penalties.**

If an employer is cited for failing to provide access to records as required under [§1910.1020](#) for inspection and copying by any employee, former employee, or authorized representative of employees, an other-than-serious citation shall normally be proposed for each record (i.e., either medical record or exposure record, on an individual employee basis). See [CPL 02-02-072](#), *Rules of Agency Practice and Procedure Concerning OSHA Access to Employee Medical Records*, dated August 22, 2007.



**EXAMPLE:** If the evidence demonstrates that an authorized employee representative requests both exposure and medical records for three employees and the request was denied by the employer, a citation would be issued for six instances (i.e., one medical record and one exposure record (total two) for each of three employees) of a violation of [§1910.1020](#).

## **IX. Criminal Penalties.**

### **A. Safety Inspection and Education Act and the Illinois Criminal Code.**

The Act and the Code provide for criminal penalties in the following cases:

1. Willful violation of an IDOL-OSHA standard, rule, or order causing the death of an employee;
2. Giving unauthorized advance notice;
3. Knowingly giving false information; and
4. Killing of an inspector while engaged in the performance of investigative, inspection or law enforcement functions;.

### **B. Courts.**

Criminal penalties are imposed by the courts after trials and not IDOL.

## **X. Handling Monies Received from Employers.**

### **A. Responsibility of the Division Manager.**

Pursuant to its statutory authority, it is IDOL policy to collect all penalties owed to the government. The Division Manager is responsible for:

1. Informing employers of IDOL's debt collection procedures;
2. Collecting assessed penalties from employers;
3. Reporting penalty amounts collected and those due;
4. Calculating interest and other charges on overdue penalty amounts;

5. Transferring selected cases to the Legal Division for legal action and subsequently tracking such cases;
6. Mailing collected monies in accordance with the procedures set forth in this chapter and in other IDOL Instructions.

**B. Receiving Payments.**

The Division Manager shall be guided by the following with regard to penalty payments:

**1. Methods of Payment.**

Employers assessed penalties shall remit the total payment by certified check, personal check, company check, postal money order, bank draft or bank money order, payable to the **Illinois Department of Labor**. Payment in cash shall not be accepted. Upon request of the employer and for good cause, alternate methods of payment are permissible, such as payments in installments.

**2. Identifying Payment.**

The Inspection Number(s), **MUST BE PLACED** in the upper left or lower left hand corner of the face of the payment instrument. The date of receipt **MUST BE STAMPED** on the face of the check and in the upper right corner if possible.

**3. Records.**

A copy of the penalty payment instrument shall be included in the case file. Additional accounting records shall also be included in the case file in accordance with current procedures.

**C. Time Allowed for Payment of Penalties.**

The date when penalties become due and payable depends on whether or not the employer contests.

**1. Uncontested Penalties.**

When citations and/or proposed penalties are uncontested, the penalties are due and payable 15 working days following the employer's receipt of the Citation and Notification of Penalty or, in the case of Informal Settlement Agreements, 15 working days after

the date of the last signature unless a later due date for payment of penalties is agreed upon in the settlement.

2. **Contested Penalties.**

When citations and/or proposed penalties are contested, the date penalties are due and payable will depend upon whether the case is resolved by a settlement agreement, an administrative law judge decision, or a court judgment.

3. **Partially Contested Penalties.**

When only part of a citation and/or a proposed penalty is contested, the due date for payment as stated in the paragraph *Uncontested Penalties*, shall be used for the uncontested items and the due date stated in the *Contested Penalties section*, for the contested items.

*NOTE: This provision notwithstanding, formal debt collection procedures will not be initiated in partially contested cases until a final order for the outstanding citation items has been issued.*

D. **Notification Procedures.**

It is IDOL policy to notify employers (the "Notice") that debts are payable and due, and to inform them of IDOL's debt collection procedures prior to assessing any applicable delinquent charges. A copy of the "Notice" stating IDOL's debt collection policy, including assessment of interest, additional charges for nonpayment and administrative costs, shall be included with each Citation and Notification of Proposed Penalty sent to employers. A copy of the "Notice" shall be retained in the case file.

E. **Notification of Overdue Debt.**

The Division Manager shall send a demand letter to the employer when the debt has become delinquent and shall retain a copy of the demand letter in the case file. A debt becomes delinquent **30 calendar days after the due date**, which is the same as the **final order date**

1. **Uncontested Case with Penalties.**

If payment of any applicable penalty is not received within 30 calendar days after the date of the expiration of the 15 working day contest period, or 15 working days after the date of the last signature (unless a later due date for payment of penalties is agreed

upon in the settlement) if an Informal Settlement Agreement has been signed, a demand letter shall be mailed.

2. **Contested Case with Penalties.**

If payment of any applicable penalty is not received within 30 calendar days after the Administrative Law Judge's Final **Order** approving a Formal Settlement Agreement and no appeal of the case has been filed by either IDOL or the employer, the Division Manager shall either send a demand letter or a letter notifying the employer that the IDOL fine is past due (without assessing late fees and updating the inspection database as if a default letter had been sent).

3. **Exceptions to Sending the Demand Letter.**

The demand letter will not be sent in the following circumstances:

- a. The employer is currently making payments under an approved installment plan or other satisfactory payment arrangement. Such plan or arrangement shall be set forth in writing and signed by the employer and the Division Manager.

*NOTE: If the employer enters into a **written** plan establishing a set payment schedule within one calendar month of the due date, but subsequently fails to make a payment within one calendar month of its scheduled due date, a payment default letter shall be sent to the employer. If the employer fails to respond satisfactorily to that letter within one month, the unpaid portion of the debt shall be handled in accordance with the Assessment Procedures.*

- b. The employer has partially contested the case (even if the penalty has not been contested). In such circumstances a demand letter shall not be sent until a final order has been issued.

F. **Assessment of Additional Charges.**

Additional charges shall be assessed in accordance with the Illinois Department of Labor Regulations.

1. **Interest.**

Interest on the unpaid principal amount shall be assessed on a monthly basis at the current annual rate if the debt has not been

paid within one calendar month of the date on which the debt (penalty) became due and payable (i.e., the date of the final order). Interest is not assessed if an acceptable repayment schedule has been established in a written plan by the due date.

*NOTE: Interest and delinquent charges are not compounded; only the unpaid balance of the penalty amount is used to calculate these additional charges.*

**2. Delinquent Charges.**

Delinquent charges shall be assessed on a monthly basis if the debt has not been paid within 3 calendar months of the delinquent date (which is one calendar month after the due date). Debts paid in full within 3 calendar months of the delinquent date shall not be assessed a delinquent charge. Delinquent charges accrue at the annual rate of 6 percent (0.5 percent per month).

*NOTE: Although the delinquent charge is not initially assessed until 3 calendar months after the debt became delinquent (4 calendar months after the due date), it is nevertheless calculated from the delinquent date. Thus, the first assessment of a delinquent charge will amount to a 3-month charge or 1.5 percent of the outstanding principal amount. Each month after that, the additional delinquent charge will be 0.5 percent of the unpaid principal.*

**3. Administrative Costs.**

Administrative costs shall be assessed for each demand letter sent in an attempt to collect the unpaid debt. Costs are not assessed for payment default letters.

**G. Assessment Procedures.**

If the penalty has not been paid by the delinquent date (i.e., within one calendar month of the due date), the Division Manager shall implement the following procedures:

1. Interest shall be assessed at the current interest rate on the unpaid balance of the debt. The rate of interest shall remain fixed for the duration of the debt.

*NOTE: Interest is to be calculated for one month and shall be assessed on the date on which such charges become payable. Any later additional charges will not be assessed until the first of the*

*month following the date on which the charge becomes payable. For example, if interest becomes payable on the twentieth of the month and the second demand letter is not sent out until the eighth of the following month, only one month's interest is assessed.*

2. The demand letter shall be sent to the employer requesting immediate payment of the debt. The demand letter shall show the total amount of the debt, including the unpaid penalty amount, interest and administrative costs.
3. Employers may respond to the demand letter in several ways:
  - a. The entire debt may be paid. In such cases no further collection action is necessary.
  - b. A repayment plan may be submitted or offered; after a set payment schedule has been approved by the Division Manager, no additional charges shall be levied against the debt as long as payments are timely made in accordance with the approved schedule.
4. If any portion of the debt remains unpaid after one calendar month from the time the demand letter was sent to the employer, the Division Manager shall institute one of the following:
  - a. Outstanding debts less than \$100 may be written off.
  - b. If the employer made a payment after receiving the demand, letter the Division may:
    - Send a receipt letter or contact the employer to request the balance due on the debt
    - Refer the case to the Legal Division.
  - c. Outstanding debts with a current debt of \$100 or more shall be referred to the Legal Division.
5. After a case has been referred to the Legal Division for collection, the Division Manager has no further responsibilities with regard to penalty collection related to that case.
6. If, after a case has been referred to the Legal Division, the employer mistakenly sends a payment to the wrong IDOL office, the case is subsequently contested, or new information regarding

the debt or employer is obtained, the Division Manager shall contact the Legal Division immediately.

7. The responsibility for closing the case remains with the Division Manager. Once final collection action has been completed, the case may be closed whenever appropriate.

**H. Application of Payments.**

Payments that are for less than the full amount of the debt shall be applied to satisfy the following categories in order of priority:

1. Administrative charges;
2. Delinquent charges;
3. Interest;
4. Outstanding principal.

**I. Uncollectible Penalties.**

There may be cases where a penalty cannot be collected, regardless of any action that has been or may be undertaken. In such cases, the Division Manager **shall notify** the Legal Division by phone or email prior to referring the case to the Office of the Director. The Legal Division will then advise what further collection action is appropriate. The database shall be updated to reflect the most recent action.

## Chapter 7

### POST-CITATION PROCEDURES AND ABATEMENT VERIFICATION

#### I. Contesting Citations, Notifications of Penalty or Abatement Dates.

Inspectors shall advise the employer that the citation, the penalty and/or the abatement date may be contested in cases where the employer does not agree to the citation, penalty or abatement date or any combination of these.

##### A. Notice of Contest.

Inspectors shall inform employers that if they intend to contest, the Division Manager must be notified in writing and such notification must be postmarked no later than the 15th working day after receipt of the citation and notification of penalty (working days are Monday through Friday, excluding State holidays), otherwise the citation becomes a final order. The agency has no authority to modify the contest period. Employers may also be apprised that their notice of contest can be sent electronically via email to the Division Manager within the 15 working day period and provide employers the email address(es). It shall be emphasized that oral notices of contest do not satisfy the requirement to give written notification. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.190]

*NOTE: Upon receipt of all electronic notices of contest, the Division Manager shall print copies of the email notice and include it in the documents and files to be transmitted to the Chief Administrative Law Judge and the Legal Division. Contest emails are not to be electronically forwarded to the Administrative Hearings or Legal Division. Offices are encouraged to establish procedures to ensure ready access to email accounts designated to receive notices of contest to ensure the timely transmission of copies to the Chief ALJ and Legal Division. IDOL's acceptance of notices of contest via email shall not be interpreted to mean that the agency has consented to, or accepted, the electronic service of documents in litigation.*

1. An employer's Notice of Intent to Contest must clearly state what is specifically being contested. It must identify which item(s) of the citation, penalty, the abatement date, or any combination of these is being objected to.
  - a. If the employer only requests a later abatement date and there are valid grounds to consider the request, the Division Manager should be contacted. The Division Manager may issue an



amended citation changing an abatement date prior to the expiration of the 15 working day period.

- b. If the employer contests only the penalty or some of the citation items, all uncontested items must still be abated by the dates indicated on the citation and the corresponding penalties paid within 15 days of notification.
2. Inspectors shall inform the employer that the Act(s) provide that employees or their authorized representative(s) have the right to contest in writing any or all of the abatement dates set for a violation if they believe the date(s) to be unreasonable.

**B. Contest Process.**

The inspector shall explain that when a Notice of Intent to Contest is properly filed (i.e., received and postmarked as described in this chapter), the Division Manager is required to forward the case to the Chief ALJ at which time the case is considered to be in litigation.

1. IDOL will normally cease all investigatory activities once an employer has filed a notice of contest. Any action relating to a contested case must first have the concurrence of the Legal Division.
2. Upon receipt of the Notice of Intent to Contest, the Chief Administrative Law Judge will schedule a hearing in either the Chicago or Springfield IDOL office, closest to the workplace.

**II. Informal Conferences.**

**A. General.**

1. The employer, any affected employee, or the employee representative may request an informal conference for the purpose of discussing any issues raised by an inspection, citation, notice of proposed penalty, or notice of intention to contest. [Ill Admin Code Part 350.220]
2. The informal conference will be conducted within the 15 working day contest period. The conference or any request for such a conference shall not operate as a stay of the 15 working day contest period.

3. If the employer's intent to contest is not clear, the Division Manager or designated representative will make an effort contact the employer for clarification.
4. Informal conferences may be held by any means practical, but meeting in person is preferred.

**B. Assistance of Counsel.**

In the event that an employer is bringing its attorney to an informal conference, the Division Manager or his or her designee may contact the Legal Division and ask for the assistance of counsel.

**C. Opportunity to Participate.**

1. If an informal conference is requested by the employer, an affected employee or his representative shall be afforded the opportunity to participate. If the conference is requested by an employee or an employee representative, the employer shall be afforded an opportunity to participate.
2. If the affected employee or employee representative chooses not to participate in the informal conference, an attempt will be made to contact that party and to solicit their input prior to the informal conference. Attempts to contact the party should be noted in the case file.

*NOTE: In the event of a settlement, it is not necessary to have the employee representative sign the informal settlement agreement.*

3. If any party objects to the attendance of another party or the Division Manager believes that a joint informal conference would not be productive, separate informal conferences may be held.
4. During the conduct of a joint informal conference, separate or private discussions will be permitted if either party so requests.

**D. Notice of Informal Conferences.**

The Division Manager shall document in the case file notification to the parties of the date, time and location of the informal conference. In addition, the Case File Diary Sheet shall indicate the date of the informal conference.

E. **Posting Requirement.**

1. The Division Manager will ask the employer at the beginning of the informal conference whether the form in the citation package indicating the date, time, and location of the conference has been posted as required.
2. If the employer has not posted the form, the Division Manager may postpone the informal conference until such action is taken.

F. **Conduct of the Informal Conference.**

The informal conference will be conducted in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. **Conference Subjects.**
  - a. Purpose of the informal conference;
  - b. Rights of participants;
  - c. Contest rights and time constraints;
  - d. Limitations, if any;
  - e. Potential for settlements of citations; and
  - f. Other relevant information (e.g., if no employee or employee representative has responded, whether the employer has posted the notification form regarding the informal conference, etc.).
2. **Subjects Not to be Addressed.**
  - a. No opinions regarding the legal merits of an employer's case shall be expressed during the informal conference.
  - b. There should be no discussion with employers or employee representatives concerning the potential for referral of fatality inspections for criminal prosecution under the Act(s).
3. **Closing Remarks.**
  - a. At the conclusion of the conference, all main issues and potential courses of action will be summarized and documented.

- b. A copy of the summary, together with any other relevant notes of the discussion made by the Division Manager, will be placed in the case file.

### **III. Petition for Modification of Abatement Date (PMA).**

An employer may file a petition for modification of abatement date when it has made a good faith effort to comply with abatement requirements, but such abatement has not been completed due to circumstances beyond its control. If the employer requests additional abatement time after the 15 working day contest period has passed, the following procedures for PMAs are to be observed: [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.160]

#### **A. Filing.**

A PMA must be filed in writing with the Enforcement Assistant Manager who issued the citation no later than the close of the next working day following the date on which abatement was originally required.

1. If a PMA is submitted orally, the employer shall be informed that IDOL cannot accept an oral PMA and that a written petition must be mailed by the end of the next working day after the abatement date. If there is not sufficient time to file a written petition, the employer shall be informed of the requirements below for late filing of the petition.
2. A late petition may be accepted only if accompanied by the employer's statement of exceptional circumstances explaining the delay.

#### **B. Where Filing Requirements Are Not Met.**

If the employer's written PMA does not meet all the Administrative Rules requirements, the employer shall be contacted within 10 working days and notified of the missing elements. A reasonable amount of time for the employer to respond shall be specified during this contact.

1. If no response is received or if the information returned is still insufficient, a second attempt (by telephone or in writing) shall be made. The employer shall be informed that if it fails to respond in a timely or adequate manner, the PMA will not be granted and the employer may be found to not have abated.
2. If the employer responds satisfactorily by telephone and the Enforcement Assistant Manager determines that the requirements

for a PMA have been met, that finding shall be documented in the case file.

3. Although IDOL policy is to handle PMAs as expeditiously as possible, there may be cases where the Enforcement Assistant Manager's decision may be delayed because of deficiencies in the PMA, the need to conduct a monitoring inspection and/or a request for upper management involvement. Requests for additional time (e.g., 45 days) for the Enforcement Assistant Manager to reach a decision shall be sent to the Division Manager. A letter conveying this request shall be simultaneously sent to the employer and the employee representatives.

**C. Approval of PMA.**

After the expiration of 15 working days following the posting of a PMA, the Division Manager shall agree with or objecting to the request within 10 working days. In the absence of a timely objection, the PMA shall be deemed granted even if not explicitly approved. The following action shall be taken:

1. If the PMA requests an abatement date that is two years or less from the issuance date of the citation, the Enforcement Assistant Manager has the authority to approve or object to the petition.
2. Any PMA requesting an abatement date that is more than two years from the issuance date of the citation requires the approval of the Division Manager as well as the Enforcement Assistant Manager.
3. If the PMA is approved, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall notify the employer and the employee representatives by letter.
4. The Enforcement Assistant Manager or Division Manager (as appropriate) after consultation with the Legal Division, shall object to a PMA where the evidence supports non-approval (e.g., employer has taken no meaningful abatement action at all or has otherwise exhibited bad faith). Both the employer and the employee representatives shall be notified of this action by letter, with return receipt requested.
  - a. Letters notifying the employer or employee representative of the objection shall be mailed on the same date.

- b. When appropriate, after consultation with the Legal Division, a failure to abate notification may be issued in conjunction with the objection to the PMA.

**D. Objection to PMA.**

Affected employees or their representatives may file a written objection to an employer's PMA with the Division Manager within 10 working days of the date of posting of the PMA by the employer or its service upon an authorized employee representative.

- 1. Failure to file such a written objection with the 10 working day period constitutes a waiver of any further right to object to the PMA.
- 2. If an employee or an employee representative objects to the extension of the abatement date, all relevant documentation shall be sent to the ALJ.
  - a. Confirmation of this action shall be mailed (return receipt requested) to the objecting party as soon as it is accomplished.
  - b. Notification of the employee objection shall be mailed (return receipt requested) to the employer on the same day that the case file is forwarded to the ALJ.

**IV. IDOL's Abatement Verification.**

**A. Important Terms and Concepts.**

- 1. **Abatement.**
  - a. Abatement means action by an employer to comply with a cited standard or regulation or to eliminate a recognized hazard identified by IDOL during an inspection.
  - b. For each inspection, except follow-up inspections, IDOL shall open an employer-specific case file. The case file remains open throughout the inspection process and is not closed until the Department is satisfied that abatement has occurred.
  - c. Employers are required to verify in writing that they have abated cited conditions.
- 2. **Abatement Verification.**

Abatement verification includes abatement certification, documents, plans, and progress reports.

3. **Abatement Certification.**

Employers must certify that abatement is complete for each cited violation. The written certification must include: the employer's name and address; the inspection number; the citation and item numbers; a statement that the information submitted is accurate; signature of the employer or employer's authorized representative; the date and method of abatement for each cited violation; and a statement that affected employees and their representatives have been informed of the abatement.

4. **Abatement Documents.**

Documentation submitted must establish that abatement has been completed, and include evidence such as the purchase or repair of equipment, photographic or video evidence of abatement or other written records verifying correction of the violative condition.

5. **Affected Employee.**

Affected employee means those employees who are exposed to the hazards(s) identified as violation(s) in a citation.

6. **Final Order Dates.**

a. **Uncontested Citation Item.**

For an uncontested citation item, the final order date is the day following the fifteenth working day after the employer's receipt of the citation.

b. **Contested Citation Item.**

For a contested citation item, the final order date is as follows:

- 1) The thirtieth day after the date on which a decision or order of an administrative law judge has been docketed; or
- 2) Where review has been directed, the thirtieth day after the date on which the ALJ issues its decision or order disposing of all or pertinent part of a case; or

- 3) The date on which an appeals court issues a decision affirming the violation in a case in which a final order of the ALJ has been stayed.

**c. Informal Settlement Dates.**

The final order date is when, within the 15 working days to contest a citation, the ISA is signed by **both** parties.

**7. Abatement Dates.**

**a. Uncontested Citations.**

For uncontested citations, the abatement date is the later of the following dates:

- 1) The abatement date identified in the citation;
- 2) The extended date established as a result of an employer's filing for a Petition for Modification of Abatement (PMA); or
- 3) The date established by an informal settlement agreement.

**b. Contested Citations.**

For contested citations for which the ALJ has issued a final order, the abatement date is the later of the following dates:

The date identified in the final order for abatement;

Where there has been a contest of a violation or abatement date (not penalty), the date computed by adding the period allowed in the citation for abatement to the final order date; or

The date established by a formal settlement agreement.

**c. Contested Penalty Only.**

Where an employer has contested only the proposed penalty, the abatement period continues to run unaffected by the contest. The abatement period is subject to the time periods set forth above.

**8. Movable Equipment.**



- a. Movable equipment means a hand-held or non-hand-held machine or device, powered or non-powered, that is used to do work and is moved within or between worksites.
- b. Hand-held equipment is equipment that is hand-held when operated and can generally be picked up and operated with one or two hands, such as a hand grinder, skill saw, portable electric drill, nail gun, etc.

9. **Worksite.**

- a. For the purpose of enforcing the Abatement Verification regulation, the worksite is the physical location specified within the “Alleged Violation Description” of the citation.
- b. If no location is specified, the worksite shall be the inspection site where the cited violation occurred.

B. **Written Certification.**

The Health and Safety Administrative Rules require those employers who have received a citation(s) for violation(s) of the Act(s) to certify in writing that they have abated the hazardous condition for which they were cited and to inform affected employees of their abatement actions. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.210]

C. **Verification Procedures.**

The verification procedures to be followed by an employer depend on the nature of the violation(s) identified and the employer's abatement actions. The abatement verification regulation establishes requirements for the following:

- 1. Abatement Certification
- 2. Abatement Documentation
- 3. Abatement Plans
- 4. Progress Reports
- 5. Tagging for Movable Equipment

D. **Supplemental Procedures.**

Where necessary, IDOL supplements these procedures with follow-up inspections and on-site monitoring inspections.

**E. Requirements.**

Except for the application of warning tags or citations on movable equipment, the abatement verification regulation does not impose any requirements on the employer until a citation item has become a final order. For moveable hand-held equipment, the warning tag or citation must be attached immediately after the employer receives the citation. For other moveable equipment, the warning tag or citation must be attached prior to moving the equipment within or between worksites. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.210]

**V. Abatement Certification.**

**A. Minimum Level.**

Abatement certification is the minimum level of abatement verification and is required for all violations once they become final orders. An exception exists where the inspector observed abatement during the on-site portion of the inspection and the violation is listed on the citation as “Corrected During Inspection (CDI)”.

**B. Certification Requirements.**

The employer's written certification that abatement is complete must include the following information for each cited violation:

1. The date and method of abatement and a statement that affected employees and their representatives have been informed of the abatement;
2. The employer's name and address;
3. The inspection number to which the submission relates;
4. The citation and item numbers to which the submission relates;
5. A statement that the information submitted is accurate; and
6. The signature of the employer or the employer's authorized representative.

**C. Certification Timeframe.**

1. All citation items which have become final orders, regardless of their characterizations, require written abatement certification within 10 calendar days of the abatement date.
2. A PMA received and processed in accordance with the Administrative Rules will suspend the 10-day time period for receipt of the abatement certification for the item for which the PMA is requested.
  - a. Thus, no citation will be issued for failure to submit the certification within 10 days of the abatement date.
  - b. If the PMA is denied, the 10-day time period for submission to IDOL begins on the day the employer receives notice of the denial.

## **VI. Abatement Documentation.**

More extensive documentation of abatement is required for the most serious violations. When a violation requires abatement documentation, in addition to certifying abatement, the employer must submit documents demonstrating that abatement is complete.

### **A. Required Abatement Documentation.**

Documentation of abatement is required for the following:

1. Willful violations;
2. Repeat violations; and
3. Serious violations where IDOL determines that such documentation is necessary as indicated on the citation.

### **B. Adequacy of Abatement Documentation.**

1. Abatement documentation must be accurate and describe or portray the abated condition adequately. It may be submitted in electronic form, if approved by the Division Manager.
2. The abatement regulation does not mandate a particular type of documentary evidence for any specific cited conditions.
3. The adequacy of the abatement documentation submitted by the employer will be assessed by IDOL using the information available in the citation and the Department's knowledge of the employer's workplace and history.

4. Examples of documents that demonstrate that abatement is complete include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Photographic or video evidence of abatement;
  - b. Evidence of the purchase or repair of equipment;
  - c. Evidence of actions taken to abate;
  - d. Bills from repair services;
  - e. Reports or evaluations by safety and health professionals describing the abatement of the hazard or a report of analytical testing;
  - f. Documentation from the manufacturer that the article repaired is within the manufacturer's specifications;
  - g. Records of training completed by employees if the citation is related to inadequate employee training; and
  - h. A copy of program documents if the citation was related to a missing or inadequate program, such as a deficiency in the employer's respirator or hazard communication program.
5. Abatement documentation (photos, employer programs, etc.) shall be retained.

**C. Inspector Observed Abatement.**

1. Employers are not required to certify abatement for violations which they promptly abate during the on-site portion of the inspection and observed by the inspector.
  - a. Division Managers may use their discretion in extending the "24 hour" time limit to document abated conditions during the inspection.
  - b. Observed abatement will be documented on the Violations Summary Form for each violation and must include the date and method of abatement.
2. If the observed abatement is for a violation that would normally require abatement documentation by the employer, the documentation in the case file must also indicate that abatement is

complete. Where suitable, the inspector may use photographs or video evidence.

3. When the abatement has been witnessed and documented by the inspector, a notation reading “Corrected During Inspection” shall be made on the citation.
4. Notations stating “Corrected during inspection” or “Employer has abated all hazards” shall not be made on the citation in cases where there is evidence of a continuing violative practice by an employer that may be subject to a summary enforcement order (i.e., failure to provide fall protection is a recurring condition based on citation history or other indications suggesting widespread violations of the same or similar standards at other establishments or construction worksites).

## **VII. Monitoring Information for Abatement Periods Greater than 90 Days.**

### **A. Abatement Periods Greater than 90 Days.**

For abatement periods greater than 90 calendar days, the Division Manager has flexibility in either requiring or not requiring monitoring information.

1. The requirement for abatement plans and progress reports must be specifically associated to the citation item to which they relate.
2. Progress reports may not be required unless abatement plans are specifically required.
3. Note: the Division Manager is not allowed to require an abatement plan for abatement periods less than 91 days or for citations characterized as other-than-serious. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.APPENDIX B]
4. The regulation places an obligation on employers, where necessary, to identify how employees are to be protected from exposure to the violative condition during the abatement period. One way of ensuring that interim protection is included in the abatement plan is to note this requirement on the citation.

### **B. Abatement Plans.**

1. The Division Manager may require an employer to submit an abatement plan for each qualifying violation.

- a. The requirement for an abatement plan must be indicated in the citation.
  - b. The citation may also call for the abatement plan to include interim measures.
2. Within 25 calendar days from the final order date, the employer must submit an abatement plan for each violation that identifies the violation and the steps to be taken to achieve abatement. The abatement plan must include a schedule for completing the abatement and, where necessary, the methods for protecting employees from exposure to the hazardous conditions in the interim until the abatement is complete. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.APPENDIX B]
3. In cases where the employer cannot prepare an abatement plan within the allotted time, a PMA must be submitted by the employer to amend the abatement date.

**C. Progress Reports.**

1. An employer that is required to submit an abatement plan may also be required to submit periodic progress reports for each cited violation. In such cases, the citation must indicate:
  - a. That periodic progress reports are required and the citation items for which they are required;
  - b. The date on which an initial progress report must be submitted, which may be no sooner than 30 calendar days after the due date of an abatement plan;
  - c. Whether additional progress reports are required; and
  - d. The date(s) on which additional progress reports must be submitted.
2. For each violation, the progress report must identify in a single sentence if possible, the action taken to achieve abatement and the date the action was taken. There is nothing in this policy or the regulation prohibiting progress reports as a result of settlement agreements.

**D. Special Requirements for Long-Term Abatement.**

1. Long-term abatement is abatement which will be completed more than one year from the citation issuance date.
2. The Division Manager must require the employer to submit an abatement plan for every violation with an abatement date in excess of one year.
3. Progress reports are mandatory and must be required at a minimum every six months. More frequent reporting may be required at the discretion of the Division Manager.

#### **VIII. Employer Failure to Submit Required Abatement Certification.**

##### **A. Actions Preceding Citation for Failure to Certify Abatement.**

1. If abatement certification, or any required documentation, is not received within 13 calendar days after the abatement date (the regulation requires filing within 10 calendar days after the abatement date; and another 3 calendar days is added for mailing), the following procedures should be followed:
  - a. Remind the employer by telephone of the requirement to submit the material and tell the employer that a citation will be issued if the required documents are not received within 7 calendar days after the telephone call.
  - b. During the conversation with the employer, determine why it has not been complied with and document all communication efforts in the case file. Discuss IDOL's PMA policy and explain that a late petition to modify the abatement date can be accepted only if accompanied by the employer's statement of exceptional circumstances explaining the delay.
  - c. Issue a follow-up letter to the employer the same day as the telephone call.
  - d. The employer may be allowed to respond via fax or email where appropriate.
2. If the certification and/or documentation are not received within the next 7 calendar days, a single other-than-serious citation will be issued.
3. Normally citations for failure to submit abatement certification shall not be issued until the above procedures have been followed and the employer has been provided additional opportunity to

comply. These pre-citation procedures also apply when abatement plans or progress reports are not received within 13 days of the due date.

**B. Citation for Failure to Certify.**

1. Citations for failure to submit abatement verification (certification, documentation, abatement plans or progress reports) can be issued without formal follow-up activities by following the procedures identified below.
2. A single other-than-serious citation will be issued combining all the individual instances where the employer has not submitted abatement certification and/or abatement documentation.
  - a. This “other” citation will be issued under the same inspection number which contained the original violations cited.
  - b. The abatement date for this citation shall be set 30 days from the date of issuance.
3. For those situations where the abatement date falls within the 15 day informal conference time period, and an informal conference request is likely, enforcement activities should be delayed for these citations until it is known if the citation's characterization or abatement period is to be modified.
4. For those rare instances where the reminder letter is returned by the Post Office as undeliverable and telephone contact efforts fail, the Division Manager has the discretion to stop further efforts to locate the employer and document in the case file the reason for no abatement certification.

**C. Certification Omissions.**

1. An initial minor or non-substantive omission in an abatement certification (e.g., lack of a definitive statement stating that the information being submitted is accurate) should be considered a de minimis condition of the regulation.
2. If there are minor deficiencies, such as omitting the inspection number, signature or date, the employer should be contacted by telephone to verify that the documents received were the ones they intended to submit. If so, the date stamp of the Division can serve as the date on the document.



3. A certification with an omitted signature should be returned to the employer to be signed.

## **IX. Tagging for Movable Equipment.**

### **A. Tag-Related Citations.**

Tag-related citations must be observed by inspectors prior to the issuance of a citation for failure to initially tag cited movable equipment. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.210]

1. IDOL must be able to prove the employer's initial failure to act (tag the movable equipment upon receipt of the citation).
2. Where there is insufficient evidence to support a violation of the employer's initial failure to tag or post the citation on the cited movable equipment, a citation may be issued for failure to maintain the tag or copy of the citation.

### **B. Equipment Which is Moved.**

Tags are intended to provide an interim form of protection to employees through notification for those who may not know of the citation or the hazardous condition. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.210]

1. For non hand-held equipment, inspectors should make every effort to be as detailed as possible when documenting the initial location where the violation occurred. This documentation is critical to the enforcement of the tagging requirement because the tagging provision is triggered upon *movement of* the equipment.
2. For hand-held equipment, employers must attach a warning tag or copy of the citation *immediately* after the employer's receipt of the citation. The attachment of the tag is not dependent on any *subsequent* movement of the equipment.

## **X. Failure to Notify Employees by Posting.**

### **A. Evidence.**

Like tag-related citations, inspectors shall investigate an employer's failure to notify employees by posting.

### **B. Location of Posting.**

Where an employer claims that posting at the location where the violation occurred would ineffectively inform employees the employer may post the document or a summary of the document in a location where it will be readily observable by affected employees and their representatives. Employers may also communicate by other means with affected employees and their representatives regarding abatement activities.

**C. Other Communication.**

The inspector must determine not only whether the documents or summaries were appropriately posted, but also whether, as an alternative, other communication methods, such as meetings or employee publications, were used.

**XI. Abatement Verification for Special Enforcement Situations.**

**A. Construction Activity Considerations.**

1. Construction activities pose situations requiring special consideration.
  - a. Construction site closure or hazard removal due to completing of the structure or project will only be accepted as abatement without certification where the inspector verifies the site closure/completion and where closure/completion effectively abates the condition cited.
  - b. In all other circumstances, the employer must certify to IDOL that the hazards have been abated by the submission of an abatement certification. In rare cases the verification may have to cease and the abatement action closed through cessation of work or verification with the general contractor of the site to verify abatement.
2. Equipment-related and all program-related (e.g., crane inspection, hazard communication, respirator, training, competent person, qualified persons, etc.) violations *will always* require employer certification of abatement regardless of construction site closure.
3. Where the violation specified in a citation is the employer's general practice of failing to comply with a requirement (e.g., the employer routinely fails to provide fall protection at its worksites), closure/completion of the individual worksite will not be accepted as abatement.

**B. Follow-Up Policy for Employer Failure to Verify Abatement.**

Follow-up or monitoring inspections would not normally be conducted when evidence of abatement is provided by the employer or employee representatives. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.200]

1. Where the employer has not submitted the required abatement certification or documentation within the time permitted, the Division Manager has discretion to conduct a follow-up inspection.
2. Submission of inadequate documents may also be the basis for a follow-up inspection.
3. This inspection should not generally occur before the end of the original 15 day contest period except in unusual circumstances.

**XII. On-site Visits: Procedures for Abatement Verification and Monitoring.**

**A. Follow-Up Inspections.**

The primary purpose of a follow-up inspection is to determine if the previously cited violations have been corrected.

**B. Enhanced Enforcement Program (EEP) Follow-Up.**

1. For any inspection which results in an EEP case, an enhanced follow-up inspection will normally be conducted even if abatement of the cited violations has been verified. The primary purpose of follow-up inspections is to assess both whether the cited violation(s) were abated and whether the employer is committing similar violations.
2. If there is a compelling reason not to conduct a follow-up inspection, the reason must be documented in the file.
3. Grouped and combined violations from the original inspection will be counted as one violation for EEP purposes.
4. For further information on exceptions for Enhanced Enforcement Program (EEP) cases, see [CPL 02-00-145](#), *Enhanced Enforcement Program (EEP) Directive*, dated January 1, 2008, for more information on the federal Enhanced Enforcement Program.

**C. Initial Follow-Up.**

1. The initial follow-up is the first follow-up inspection after issuance of the citation.
2. If a violation is found not to have been abated, the inspector shall inform the employer that the employer is subject to a Notification of a Repeat or Failure-to-Abate Violation and proposed penalties while such failure or violation continues.
3. Failure to comply with enforceable interim abatement dates involving multi-step abatement shall be subject to a Notification of Failure to Abate Alleged Violation.
4. Where the employer has implemented some controls, but the control measures were inadequate during follow-up monitoring, and other technology was available which would have brought the process into compliance, a Notification of Repeat or Failure to Abate Alleged Violation normally may be issued. If the employer has exhibited good faith, a late PMA for extenuating circumstances may be considered.
5. Where an apparent failure to abate by means of engineering controls is found to be due to technical infeasibility, no failure to abate notice shall be issued; however, if proper administrative controls, work practices or personal protective equipment are not utilized, a Notification of Failure to Abate Alleged Violation shall be issued.

**D. Second Follow-Up.**

1. Any subsequent follow-up after the initial follow-up inspection dealing with the same violations is considered a second follow-up.
  - a. After the Notification of Failure to Abate Alleged Violation has been issued, the Division Manager shall allow a reasonable time for abatement of the violation before conducting a second follow-up. The employer must ensure that employees are adequately protected by other means until the violations are corrected.
  - b. If the employer contests the proposed additional daily penalties, a follow-up inspection shall still be scheduled to ensure correction of the original violation.
2. If a second follow-up inspection reveals the employer still has not corrected the original violations, a second Notification of Failure to Abate Alleged Violation with penalties shall be issued if the

Division Manager, after consultation with the Legal Division, believes it to be appropriate.

3. If a Notification of Failure to Abate Alleged Violation and penalties are not to be proposed because of an employer's flagrant disregard of a citation or an item on a citation, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall immediately contact the Division Manager, in writing, detailing the circumstances so the matter can be referred to the Legal Division for action, as appropriate.

**E. Follow-Up Inspection Reports.**

1. Follow-up inspection reports shall be included with the original initial inspection case file. The applicable identification and description sections of the Violation Worksheet shall be used for documenting correction of willful, repeated, and serious violations and failure to correct items during follow-up inspections.
2. If Serious, Willful, or Repeat violation items were appropriately grouped in the Violation Worksheet of the original case file, they may be grouped on the follow-up violation worksheet; otherwise, individual forms shall be used for each item. The correction of other-than-serious violations may be documented in the narrative portion of the case file.
3. **Documentation of Hazard Abatement by Employer.**
  - a. The hazard abatement observed by the inspector shall be specifically described in the violation worksheet form, including any applicable dimensions, materials, specifications, personal protective equipment, engineering controls, measurements or readings, or other conditions.
  - b. Brief terms such as "corrected" or "in compliance" will not be accepted as proper documentation for violations having been corrected.
  - c. When appropriate, this written description shall be supplemented by a photograph and/or a videotape to illustrate correction circumstances.
  - d. Only the item description and identification blocks need be completed on the follow-up worksheet with an occasional inclusion of an applicable employer statement concerning correction under the employer knowledge section, if appropriate.

4. **Sampling.**

- a. Inspectors conducting a follow-up inspection to determine abatement of violations of air contaminant or noise standards, shall decide whether sampling is necessary and if so, what kind (i.e., spot sampling, short-term sampling, or full-shift sampling).
- b. If there is reasonable probability that a Notification of Failure to Abate Alleged Violation will be issued, full-shift sampling is required to verify exposure limits based on an 8 hour time-weighted average.

5. **Narrative.**

The inspector must include in the narrative the findings pursuant to the inspection, along with recommendations for action. In order to make a valid recommendation, it is important to have all the pertinent factors available in an organized manner.

6. **Failure to Abate.**

In the event that any item has not been abated, complete documentation shall be included on a violation worksheet.

F. **Summary Enforcement Action.**

There may be times during the initial follow-up when, because of an employer's flagrant disregard of a citation or other factors, it will be apparent that traditional enforcement actions would be inappropriate or ineffective. In such cases, a summary enforcement action shall be initiated. The Enforcement Assistant Manager shall notify the Division Manager, in writing, of all the particular circumstances of the case for referral to the Legal Division.

**XIII. Monitoring Inspections.**

A. **General.**

Monitoring inspections are conducted to ensure that hazards are being corrected and employees are being protected, whenever a long period of time is needed for an establishment to come into compliance. Such inspections may be scheduled, among other reasons, as a result of:

- ▶ Abatement dates in excess of one year.
- ▶ A petition for modification of abatement date (PMA).
- ▶ To ensure that terms of a permanent variance are being carried out.
- ▶ At the request of an employer requesting technical assistance granted by the Division Manager.

**B. Conduct of Monitoring Inspection (PMAs and Long-Term Abatement).**

Monitoring inspections shall be conducted in the same manner as follow-up inspections. An inspection shall be classified as a monitoring inspection when a safety/health inspection is conducted for one or more of the following purposes:

- ▶ Determine the progress an employer is making toward final correction.
- ▶ Ensure that the target dates of a multi-step abatement plan are being met.
- ▶ Ensure that an employer's petition for the modification of abatement dates is made in good faith and that the employer has attempted to implement necessary controls as expeditiously as possible.
- ▶ Ensure that the employees are being properly protected until final controls are implemented.
- ▶ Ensure that the terms of a permanent variance are being carried out.
- ▶ Provide abatement assistance for items under citation.

**C. Abatement Dates in Excess of One Year.**

1. Monitoring visits shall be scheduled to check on progress made whenever abatement dates extend beyond one year from the issuance date of the citation.
2. These inspections shall be conducted approximately every six months, counted from the citation date, until final abatement has been achieved for all cited violations.
  - a. If the case has been contested, the final order date shall be used as a starting point, instead of the citation date.

- b. A settlement agreement may specify an alternative monitoring schedule.
- 3. If the employer is submitting satisfactory quarterly progress reports and the Division Manager agrees after careful review, that these reports reflect adequate progress on implementation of control measures and adequate interim protection for employees, a monitoring inspection may be conducted every twelve months.
- 4. Such inspections shall have priority equal to that of serious formal complaints. The seriousness of the hazards requiring abatement shall determine the priority among monitoring inspections.

**D. Monitoring Abatement Efforts.**

- 1. The Division Manager shall take the steps necessary to ensure that the employer is making a good faith attempt to bring about abatement as expeditiously as possible.
- 2. Where engineering controls have been cited or required for abatement, a monitoring inspection shall be scheduled to evaluate the employer's abatement efforts. Failure to conduct a monitoring inspection shall be fully explained in the case file.
- 3. Where no engineering controls have been cited but more time is needed for other reasons not requiring assistance from IDOL, such as delays in receiving equipment, a monitoring visit need not normally be scheduled.
- 4. Monitoring inspections shall be scheduled as soon as possible after the initial contact with the employer and shall not be delayed until actual receipt of the PMA.
- 5. Inspectors shall decide during the monitoring inspection whether sampling is necessary and, if so, to what extent; i.e., spot sampling, short-term sampling, or full-shift sampling.
- 6. Inspectors shall include pertinent findings in the narrative along with recommendations for action. To reach a valid conclusion when recommending action, it is important to have all the relevant factors available in an organized manner. The factors to be considered may include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Progress reports or other indications of the employer's good faith, demonstrating effective use of technical expertise and/or



management skills, accuracy of information reported by the employer, and timeliness of progress reports.

- b. The employer's assessment of the hazards by means of surveys performed by in-house personnel, consultants, and/or the employer's insurance agency.
- c. Other documentation collected including verification of progress reports, success and/or failure of abatement efforts, and assessment of current exposure levels of employees.
- d. Employer and employee interviews.
- e. Specific reasons for requesting additional time including specific plans for controlling exposure and specific calendar dates.
- f. Personal protective equipment.
- g. Medical programs.
- h. Emergency action plans.

#### **XIV. Notification of Failure to Abate.**

##### **A. Violation.**

A Notification of Failure to Abate an Alleged Violation (OSHA-2B) shall be issued in cases where violations have not been corrected as required, as verified by an on-site inspection or follow-up inspection.

##### **B. Penalties.**

Failure to abate penalties shall be applied when an employer has not corrected a previously cited violation which had become a final order. \$1000/day penalties can be assessed for each citation that has been classified as failure to abate.

#### **XV. Case File Management.**

##### **A. Closing of Case File Without Abatement Certification.**

The closing of a case file without abatement certification(s) must be justified through a statement in the case file by the Division Manager or

his/her designee, addressing the reason for accepting each uncertified violation as an abated citation.

**B. Review of Employer-Submitted Abatement.**

Enforcement Assistant Managers are encouraged to review employer-submitted abatement verification materials as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after receipt. If the review will be delayed, notify the employer that the material will be reviewed by a certain date, and that the case will be closed if appropriate, after that time.

**C. Whether to Keep Abatement Documentation.**

Abatement documentation (photos, employer programs, etc.) shall be retained in the case file.

**XVI. Abatement Services Available to Employers.**

Employers requesting abatement assistance shall be informed that IDOL is willing to work with them even after citations have been issued and provides incentives for immediate on-site abatement of certain types of violations.

## Chapter 8

### SETTLEMENTS

#### I. Settlement of Cases by Division Manager.

The Division Manager is granted settlement authority and shall follow these instructions when negotiating settlement agreements.

##### A. General.

1. Except for cases that affect other jurisdictions, the Division Manager may enter into Informal Settlement Agreements with employers prior to the employer filing a formal written notice of contest.

*NOTE: After the employer has filed a written formal notice of contest, the Division Manager may proceed toward a Formal Settlement Agreement with the concurrence and participation of the Legal Division.*

2. Division Managers may amend abatement dates, reclassify violations (e.g., willful to serious, serious to other-than-serious), and modify or withdraw a penalty, a citation, or a citation item, where evidence establishes during the informal conference that the changes are justified.
3. Division Managers may actively negotiate the amount of proposed penalties, depending on the circumstances of the case and the particular improvements in employee safety and health that can be obtained.
4. Employers shall be informed that they are required to post copies of all amendments or changes to citations resulting from informal conferences. Employee representatives must also be provided with copies of any agreements. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.220]

##### B. Pre-Contest Settlement (Informal Settlement Agreement).

Pre-contest settlement discussions will generally occur during or immediately following the informal conference and prior to the expiration of the 15 working day contest period.

1. In the event that an employer is bringing an attorney to an informal conference, the Division Manager or their designee is encouraged to contact the Legal Division and ask for the assistance of counsel.
2. If a settlement is reached during the informal conference, an Informal Settlement Agreement (ISA) shall be prepared and the employer will be asked to sign it. It will be effective upon signature of both the employer and the Division Manager (**who shall sign last**), provided the contest period has not expired. Both parties will date the documents on the day of actual signature.
3. If the employer is not present to sign the ISA, the Division Manager shall send the agreement to the employer for signature. After signing, the employer must return the agreement to the Division Manager by certified mail, hand delivery or via facsimile within the 15 day contest period.
  - a. In every case, the Division Manager shall give employers notice in writing that the citation will become final and unreviewable at the end of the contest period, unless the employer signs the proposed agreement or files a written notice of contest.
  - b. If an employer wishes to make any changes to the text of the agreement, the Division Manager must agree to and authorize the proposed changes prior to the expiration of the contest period.
    - If the changes proposed by the employer are acceptable to the Division Manager, the exact language written into the agreement shall be mutually agreed upon. Employers shall be instructed to incorporate the agreed-upon language into the agreement, sign it, and return by hand delivery or via facsimile.
    - Annotations incorporating the exact language of any changes authorized shall be made to the retained copy of the agreement and signed and dated by the Division Manager.
  - c. Upon receipt of the ISA signed by the employer, the Division Manager will ensure, prior to his/her signature that any modifications to the agreement are consistent with the notations made in the case file.

- In these cases, the citation record will then be updated in the inspection database in accordance with current procedures.
  - If an employer's changes substantially alter the original terms, the agreement signed by the employer will be treated as a notice of contest and handled accordingly. The employer will be informed of this as soon as possible.
- d. A reasonable time will be allowed for return of the agreement from the employer.
- If an agreement is not received within the 15 day contest period, the Division Manager will presume the employer did not sign the agreement, and the citation will be treated as a final order.
  - The employer will be required to certify that the informal settlement agreement was signed prior to the expiration of the contest period.
4. If settlement efforts are unsuccessful and the employer contests the citation, the Division Manager will state the terms of the final settlement offer in the case file.

**C. Procedures for Preparing the Informal Settlement Agreement.**

The ISA shall be prepared and processed in accordance with current IDOL policies and practices.

**D. Post-Contest Settlement (Formal Settlement Agreement).**

Post-contest settlements will normally occur before the complaint is filed with the Chief ALJ.

1. Following the filing of a notice of contest, the Division Manager shall (unless other procedures have been agreed upon) notify the Legal Division when it appears that negotiations with the employer may produce a settlement. This notification shall occur at the time the notice of contest transmittal memorandum is sent to the Legal Division.
2. If a settlement is later requested by the employer, the Division Manager will communicate the proposed terms to the Legal Division, who will then draft and execute the agreement.

## **Chapter 9**

### **COMPLAINT AND REFERRAL PROCESSING**

#### **I. Safety and Health Complaints and Referrals.**

##### **A. Definitions.**

##### **1. Complaint.**

Notice of an alleged safety or health hazard (over which IDOL has jurisdiction), or a violation of the Act(s), submitted by a current employee or representative of employees.

##### **2. Formal Complaint.**

Complaint made by a current employee or a representative of employees that meets all of the following requirements:

- a. Asserts that an imminent danger, a violation of the Act(s), or a violation of an IDOL-OSHA Standard exposes employees to a potential physical or health harm in the workplace;
- b. Is reduced to writing or submitted on an IDOL complaint form; and
- c. Is signed by at least one current employee or employee representative.

##### **3. Non-formal Complaint.**

Any complaint alleging safety or health violations that does not meet all of the requirements of a formal complaint identified above and does not come from one of the sources identified under the definition of Referral, below.

##### **4. Inspection.**

An on-site examination of an employer's worksite conducted by an IDOL inspector, initiated as the result of a complaint or referral, and meeting at least one of the criteria identified in the section on Criteria Warranting an Inspection, below.

##### **5. Inquiry.**

6. A process conducted in response to a complaint or a referral that does not meet one of the identified inspection criteria as listed above. It does not involve an onsite inspection of the workplace, but rather the employer is notified of the alleged hazard(s) or violation(s) by telephone, fax, email, or by letter if necessary. The employer is then requested to provide a response, and IDOL will notify the complainant of that response via appropriate means.  
**Electronic Complaint.**

A complaint submitted via OSHA's public website and forwarded to IDOL. All complaints submitted via OSHA's public website are considered non-formal.

7. **Permanently Disabling Injury or Illness.**

An injury or illness that has resulted in permanent disability or an illness that is chronic or irreversible. Permanently disabling injuries or illnesses include, but are not limited to amputation, blindness, a standard threshold shift in hearing, lead or mercury poisoning, paralysis or third-degree burns.

8. **Referral.**

An allegation of a potential workplace hazard or violation received from one of the sources listed below.

- a. **Inspector referral** – information based on the direct observation of an inspector. This observation must be certified in writing with signature.
- b. **Safety and health agency referral** – from sources including, but not limited to: NIOSH, OSHA, consultation, and state or local health departments, as well as safety and/or health professionals in other State agencies. These referrals must be reduced to writing and a signature obtained.
- c. **Discrimination complaint referral** – made by a whistleblower investigator when an employee alleges that he or she was retaliated against for complaining about safety or health conditions in the workplace, refusing to do an allegedly imminently dangerous task, or engaging in other activities related to occupational safety or health.
- d. **Other government agency referral** – made by other Federal, State, or local government agencies or their employees, including local police and fire departments.

- e. **Media report** – either news items reported in the media or information reported directly to *IDOL* by a media source.
- f. **Employer report** - of serious accidents other than *fatalities and catastrophes*.

9. **Representative of Employees.**

Any of the following:

- a. An authorized representative of the employee bargaining unit, such as a certified or recognized labor organization.
- b. An attorney acting for an employee.
- c. Any other person acting in a bona fide representative capacity, including, but not limited to, members of the clergy, social workers, spouses and other family members, and government officials or nonprofit groups and organizations acting upon specific complaints and injuries from individuals who are employees.

*NOTE: The representative capacity of the person filing complaints on behalf of another should be ascertained unless it is already clear. In general, the affected employee should have requested, or at least approved, the filing of the complaint on his or her behalf.*

B. **Classifying as a Complaint or a Referral.**

Whether the information received is classified as a complaint or a referral, an inspection of a workplace is normally warranted if **at least one** of the conditions in the section *Criteria Warranting an Inspection* is met.

C. **Criteria Warranting an Inspection.**

An inspection is normally warranted if **at least one** of the conditions below is met:

- 1. A valid formal complaint is submitted. Specifically, the complaint must be reduced to writing or submitted on an *IDOL* complaint form, be signed by a current employee or representative of employees, and state the reason for the inspection request with reasonable particularity. Additionally, there must be reasonable



grounds to believe either that a violation of the Act(s) or IDOL-OSHA standard that exposes employees to physical harm exists, or that an imminent danger of death or serious injury exists.

2. The information alleges that a permanently disabling injury or illness has occurred as a result of the complained of hazard(s), and there is reason to believe that the hazard or related hazards still exists.
3. The information alleges that an imminent danger situation exists.
4. The information concerns an establishment and an alleged hazard covered by an adopted local, regional, or national emphasis program.
5. The employer fails to provide an adequate response to an inquiry, or the individual who provided the original information provides further evidence that the employer's response is false or does not adequately address the hazard(s). The evidence must be descriptive of current, on-going or recurring hazardous conditions.
6. The establishment that is the subject of the information has a history of egregious, willful, failure-to-abate, or repeated citations during the past five years, or is an establishment or related establishment. However, if the employer has previously submitted adequate documentation for these violations demonstrating that they were corrected and that programs have been implemented to prevent a recurrence of hazards, the Division Manager will normally determine that an inspection is not necessary.
7. If an inspection is scheduled or has begun at an establishment and another complaint or a referral is received, that complaint or referral may, at the Division Manager's discretion, be incorporated into the scheduled or ongoing inspection. If such a complaint is formal, the additional complainant must receive a written response addressing the complaint items.
8. A whistleblower investigator requests that an inspection be conducted in response to an employee's allegation that the employee was discriminated against for complaining about safety or health conditions in the workplace, refusing to perform an allegedly dangerous job or task, or engaging in other activities related to occupational safety or health.

9. If the information gives reasonable grounds to believe that an employee under 18 years of age is exposed to a serious violation of a safety or health standard or a serious hazard, an on-site inspection will be initiated if the information relates to construction, or other entities as determined by the Division Manager. A referral to Fair Labor Standards would also be initiated.
10. The information received is a signed, written complaint from a current employee or employee representative that alleges a recordkeeping deficiency that indicates the existence of a serious safety or health violation.

**D. Electronic Complaints Received via the OSHA Website.**

1. Electronic complaints submitted via the OSHA public website are automatically forwarded via email to a designated IDOL Office.
2. Complete an IDOL complaint form for all information received.
3. Information received electronically from a current employee is considered a non-formal complaint until that individual provides a signed copy of the information. The employee can send or fax a signed copy of the information, request that an IDOL complaint form be sent, or sign the information in person at the nearest IDOL office. Normally a complainant has five working days to formalize an electronic complaint. The Enforcement Assistant Manager must actively follow up on information received electronically in order to provide the employee with the opportunity to formalize the complaint.
4. All complaint-related material received electronically should be printed and date stamped with the date the material was submitted and received. When these dates are not the same, the Enforcement Assistant Manager will determine the appropriate date for the incoming material.

**E. Information Received by Telephone.**

1. While speaking with the caller, IDOL personnel will attempt to obtain the following information:
  - a. Whether the caller is a current employee or an employee representative.

- b. The exact nature of the alleged hazard(s) and the basis of the caller's knowledge. The individual receiving the information must determine, to the extent possible, whether the information received describes an apparent violation of IDOL- OSHA standards or the Act(s).
    - c. The employer's name, address, email address, telephone and fax numbers, as well as the name of a contact person at the worksite.
    - d. The name, address, telephone number, and email address of any union and/or employee representative at the worksite.
  2. As appropriate, IDOL will provide the caller with the following information:
    - a. Describe the complaint process, and if appropriate, the concepts of "inquiry" and "inspection", as well as the relative advantages of each.
    - b. If the caller is a current employee or a representative of employees, explain the rights and protections that accompany filing a formal complaint. These rights and protections include:
      - The right to request an on-site inspection.
      - Notification in writing if an inspection is deemed unnecessary because there are no reasonable grounds to believe that a violation or danger exists.
      - The right to obtain review of a decision not to inspect by submitting a request for review in writing.
3. Information received by telephone from a current employee is considered a non-formal complaint until that individual provides a signed copy of the information. The employee can send or fax a signed copy of the information, request that an IDOL complaint form be sent, or sign the information in person at the nearest IDOL office. Normally a complainant has five working days to formalize an electronic complaint.
4. If appropriate, inform the complainant of rights to confidentiality in accordance with the Act(s), and ask whether the complainant wishes to exercise this right. When confidentiality is requested,

the identity of the complainant is protected regardless of the formality of the complaint.

5. Explain Section 2.2 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act rights to employees.
  - a. A person may not discharge or in any way discriminate against any employee because the employee has filed a complaint or instituted or caused to be instituted any proceeding under or related to this Act or the Health and Safety Act or has testified or is about to testify in any such proceeding or because of the exercise by the employee on behalf of himself or herself or others of any right afforded by this Act or the Health and Safety Act.
  - b. Any employee who believes that he or she has been discharged or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of this Section may, within 30 calendar days after the violation occurs, file a complaint with the Director of Labor alleging the discrimination. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Director of Labor shall cause such investigation to be made as the Director deems appropriate. If, after the investigation, the Director of Labor determines that the provisions of this Section have been violated, the Director shall bring an action in the circuit court for appropriate relief, including rehiring or reinstatement of the employee to his or her former position with back pay, after taking into account any interim earnings of the employee.

**F. Procedures for an Inspection.**

1. Upon receipt of a complaint or referral, the Enforcement Assistant Manager (or his or her designee) will evaluate all available information to determine whether there are reasonable grounds to believe that a violation or hazard exists.
  - a. If necessary, reasonable attempts will be made to contact the individual who provided the information in order to obtain additional details or to clarify issues raised in the complaint or referral.
  - b. The Enforcement Assistant Manager may determine not to inspect a facility if he/she has a substantial reason to believe that the condition complained of is being or has been abated.

2. Despite the existence of a complaint, if the Enforcement Assistant Manager, believes there are no reasonable grounds that a violation or hazard exists, no inspection or inquiry will be conducted.
  - a. Where a formal complaint has been submitted, the complainant will be notified in writing of IDOL's intent not to conduct an inspection, the reasoning behind the determination, and the right to have the determination reviewed. The justification for not inspecting will be noted in the case file.
  - b. In the event of a non-formal complaint or referral, if possible, the individual providing the information will be notified by appropriate means of IDOL's intent not to conduct an inquiry or inspection. The justification for not inspecting will be noted in the case file.
3. If the information contained in the complaint or referral meets at least one of the inspection criteria listed in this chapter, *Criteria Warranting an Inspection*, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that a violation or hazard exists, IDOL is authorized to conduct an inspection.
  - a. If appropriate, the Enforcement Assistant Manager or assigned inspector will inform the individual providing the information that an inspection will be scheduled and that he or she will be advised of the results.
  - b. After the inspection, the inspector will send the individual a letter addressing each information item, with reference to the citation(s) or a sufficiently detailed explanation for why a citation was not issued.
4. If an inspection is warranted, it will be initiated as soon as resources permit. Inspections resulting from formal complaints of serious safety hazards will normally be initiated within five working days of formalizing and within ten working days of formalizing for serious health hazards.

**G. Procedures for an Inquiry.**

1. If the complaint or referral does not meet the criteria for initiating an onsite inspection, an inquiry will be conducted. IDOL will promptly contact the employer to notify it of the complaint or referral and its allegation(s), and fax or email a confirming letter.

2. If a non-formal complaint is submitted by a current employee or a representative of employees that does not meet any of the inspection criteria, the complainant may be given five working days to make the complaint formal.
  - a. The complainant may come into the Office and sign the complaint, or mail or fax a signed complaint letter to IDOL. Additionally, a complaint form can be mailed or faxed to the complainant, if appropriate.
  - b. If the complaint is not made formal after five working days, after making a reasonable attempt to inform the complainant of the decision, IDOL will proceed with the inquiry process.
3. The employer will be advised of what information is needed to answer the inquiry and encouraged to respond by fax or email. Employers are encouraged to do the following:
  - a. Immediately investigate and determine whether the complaint or referral information is valid and make any necessary corrections or modifications.
  - b. Advise the Enforcement Assistant Manager either in writing or via email within five working days of the results of the investigation into the alleged complaint or referral information. At the discretion of the Enforcement Assistant Manager, the response time may be longer or shorter than five working days, depending on the circumstances. Additionally, although the employer is requested to respond within the above time frame, the employer may not be able to complete abatement action during that time, but is encouraged to do so.
  - c. Provide the Enforcement Assistant Manager with supporting documentation of the findings, including any applicable measurements or monitoring results, and photographs and/or videos that the employer believes would be helpful, as well as a description of any corrective action the employer has taken or is in the process of taking.
  - d. Post a copy of the letter from IDOL where it is readily accessible for review by all employees.
  - e. Return a copy of the signed Certificate of Posting to the IDOL Office.

- f. If there is a recognized employee union or safety and health committee in the facility, provide it with a copy of IDOL's letter and the employer's response.
- 4. As soon as possible after contacting the employer, a notification letter will be faxed to the employer, or mailed where no fax is available. If email is an acceptable means of responding, this should be indicated in the notification letter and the proper email address should be provided.
- 5. If no employer response or an inadequate employer response is received after the allotted five working days, additional contact with the employer may be made before an inspection is scheduled. If the employer provides no response or an inadequate response, or if IDOL determines from other information that the condition has not been or is not being corrected, an inspection will be scheduled.
- 6. The complainant will be advised of the employer's response, as well as the complainant's rights to dispute that response, and if the alleged hazard persists, of the right to request an inspection. When IDOL receives an adequate response from the employer and the complainant does not dispute or object to the response, an onsite inspection normally will not be conducted.
- 7. If the complainant is a current employee or a representative of employees and wishes to dispute the employer's response, the disagreement must be submitted in writing and signed, thereby making the complaint formal.
  - a. If the employee disagreement takes the form of a written and signed formal complaint, see *Procedures for an Inspection*.
  - b. If the employee disagreement does not take the form of a written and signed formal complaint, some discretion is allowed in situations where the information does not justify an onsite inspection. In such situations, the complainant will be notified of IDOL's intent not to conduct an inspection and the reasoning behind the determination. This decision should be thoroughly documented in the case file.
- 8. If a signed complaint is received after the complaint inquiry process has begun, the Enforcement Assistant Manager will determine whether the alleged hazard is likely to exist based on the employer's response and by contacting the complainant. The complainant will be informed that the inquiry has begun and that

the complainant retains the right to request an onsite inspection if he/she disputes the results and believes the hazard still exists.

9. The complaint must not be closed until IDOL verifies that the hazard has been abated.
10. The justification for not conducting an inquiry will be noted in the case file.

#### **H. Complainant Protection.**

##### **1. Identity of the Complainant.**

Upon request of the complainant, his or her identity will be withheld from the employer. No information will be given to the employer that would allow the employer to identify the complainant.

##### **2. Whistleblower Protection.**

- a. Section 2.2 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act provides protection for employees who believe that they have been the subject of an adverse employment action in retaliation for engaging in activities related to workplace safety or health. Any employee who believes that he or she has been discharged or otherwise retaliated against by any person as a result of engaging in such activities may file a whistleblower complaint. The complaint must be filed within thirty days of the discharge or other retaliation.
- b. Complainants should always be advised of their Section 2.2. Whistleblower rights and protections upon initial contact with IDOL and whenever appropriate in subsequent communications.

#### **I. Recording in Inspection Database.**

Information about complaint inspections or inquiries must be inputted in the inspection database following current operations manual.

### **II. Whistleblower Complaints.**

- A. IDOL enforces the whistleblower or anti-retaliation provisions of the Safety Inspection and Education Act. This statute provides that employers may not discharge or otherwise retaliate against an employee because the

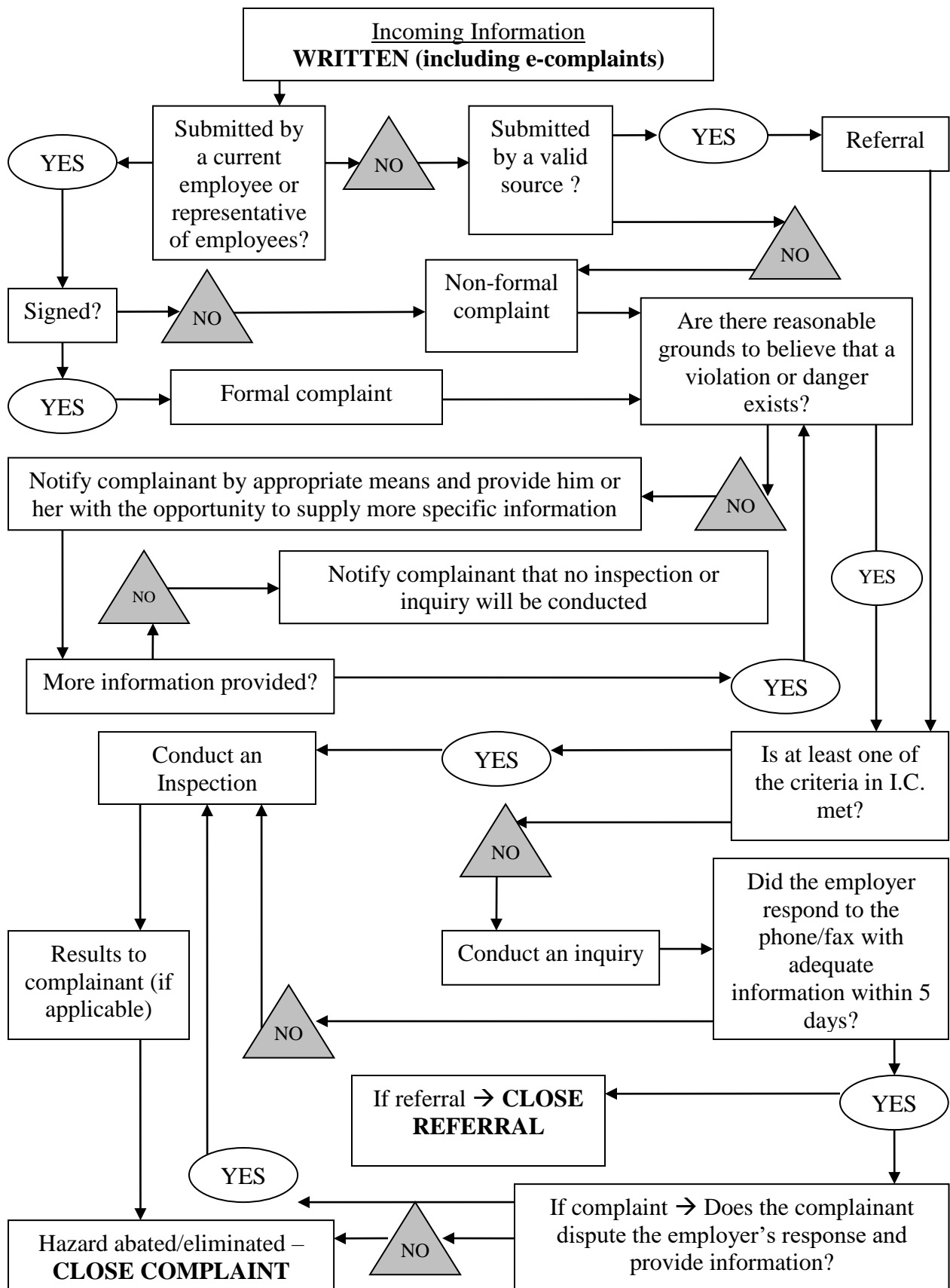


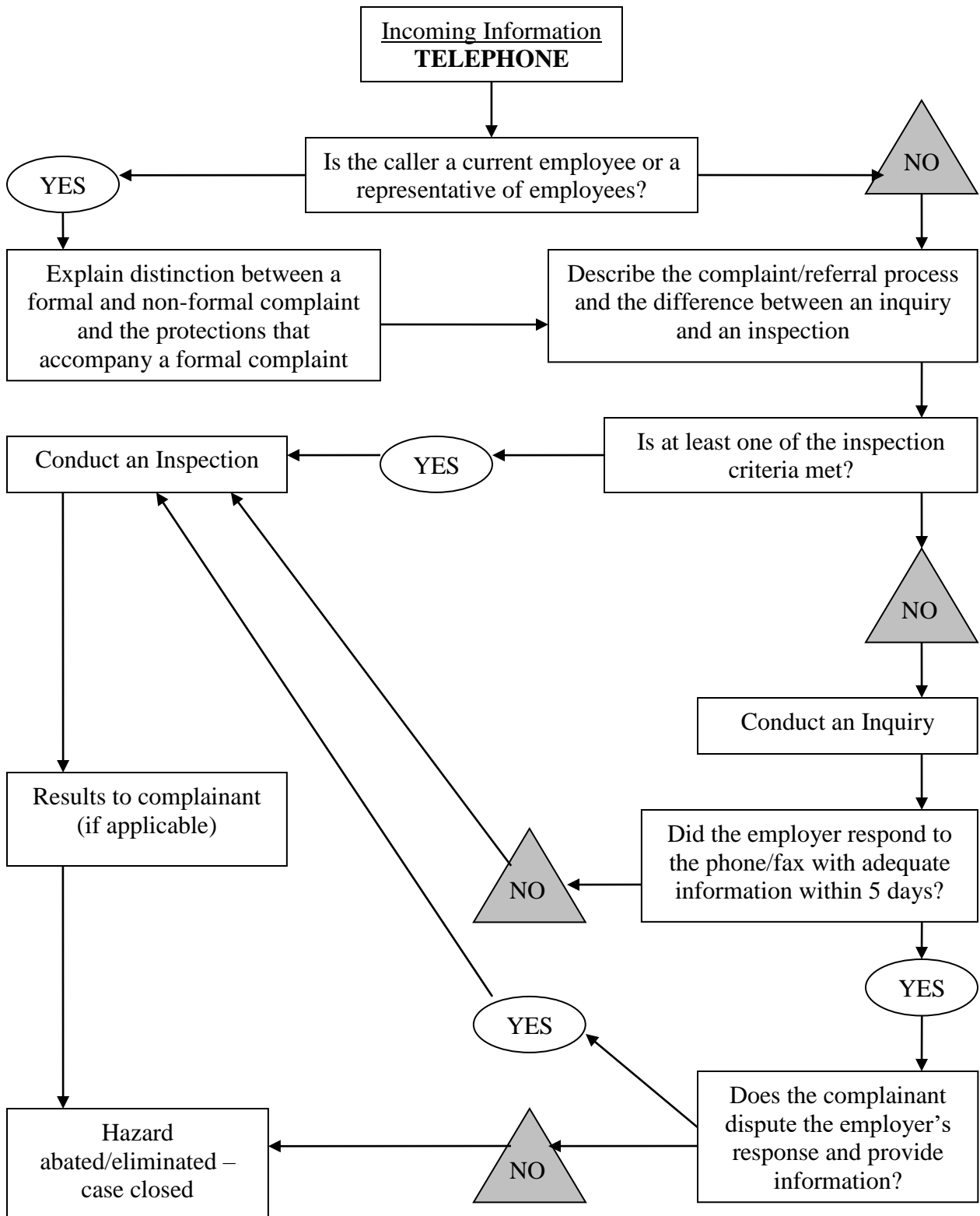
employee has reported an alleged violation related to the statute to an employer or a government agency.

- B. In the context of an IDOL enforcement action or a consultation activity, the complainant will be advised of the protection against retaliation afforded by Section 2.2 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act. A Whistleblower complaint may be in any form, including an oral complaint made to an inspector. Thus, if a person alleges that he has suffered an adverse action because of a protected activity, inspectors will record that person's identifying information and the date and time of this initial contact on a Whistleblower complaint form and forward it for processing.
- C. In State Plan States, employees may file occupational safety and health retaliation complaints with Federal OSHA, the State, or both. In Illinois, Federal OSHA refers such complaints in the public sector to the Illinois State Plan for investigation.

### **III. Decision Tree.**

- A. See tree on page 9-13 for IDOL enforcement action or consultation activity when information is obtained in writing.
- B. See tree on page 9-14 for OSHA enforcement action or consultation activity when information is obtained orally.





## Complaint Questionnaire

Obtain information from the caller by asking the following questions, where relevant.

### **For All Complaints:**

1. What is the specific safety or health hazard?

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2. Has the hazardous condition been brought to the employer's attention? If so, when? How?

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3. How are employees exposed to this hazard? Describe the unsafe or unhealthful working conditions; identify the location.

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4. What work is done in the unsafe/unhealthful area? Identify, as well as possible, the type and condition of equipment in use, the materials (e.g., chemicals) being used, the process/operation involved, and the kinds of work being done near the hazardous area. Have there been any recent chemical spills, releases, or accidents?

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5. With what frequency are employees doing the task that leads to the exposure? Continuously? Every day? Every week? Rarely? For how long at one time? How long has the condition existed (so far as can be determined)? Has it been brought to the employer's attention? Have any attempts been made to correct the condition, and, if so, who took these actions? What were the results?

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6. How many shifts are there? What time do they start? On which shift does the hazardous condition exist?

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7. What personal protective equipment (e.g., hearing protection, gloves or respirators) is required by the employer relevant to the alleged exposure? Is it used by employees? Include all PPE and describe it as specifically as possible. Include the manufacturer's name and any identifying numbers.

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8. How many people work in the establishment? How many are exposed to the hazardous conditions? How near do they get to the hazard?

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9. Is there an employee representative or a union in the establishment? Include the name, address, and telephone number of the union and/or the employee representative(s).

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**For Health Hazards**

10. Has the employer administered any tests to determine employee exposure levels to the hazardous conditions or substance? Describe these tests. Can the employees get the results (as required by the standard)? What were the results?

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11. What engineering controls are in place in the area(s) in which the exposed employees work? For instance, are there any fans or acoustical insulation in the area which may reduce exposure to the hazard?

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12. What administrative or work practice controls has the employer put in place?

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13. Do any employees have any symptoms that may have been caused by exposure to hazardous substances? Have any employees ever been treated by a physician for a work-related disease or condition? What was it?

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14. Have there been any “near-miss” incidents?

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15. Are respirators worn to protect against health hazards? If so, what kind? What exposures are they protecting against?

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16. If the complaint is related to noise, what, if any, hearing protection is provided to and worn by the employees?

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17. Do employees receive audiograms on a regular basis?

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**For Safety Hazards:**

18. Under what adverse or hazardous conditions are employees required to work? This should include conditions contributing to stress and “other” probability factors.

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19. Have any employees been injured as a result of this hazardous condition? Have there been any “near-miss” incidents?

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## Chapter 10

# IMMINENT DANGER, FATALITY, CATASTROPHE, AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

### I. Imminent Danger Situations.

#### A. General.

##### 1. Definition of Imminent Danger.

Section 2.0(b)(7) of the Safety Inspection and Education Act defines imminent danger as "...any conditions or practices in any place of employment which are such that a danger exists which could reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm immediately or before the imminence of such danger can be eliminated through the enforcement procedures otherwise provided by this or the Health and Safety Act."

##### 2. Conditions of Imminent Danger.

The following conditions must be present in order for a hazard to be considered an imminent danger:

- a. Death or serious harm must be threatened; AND
- b. It must be reasonably likely that a serious accident could occur immediately OR, if not immediately, then before abatement would otherwise be implemented.

*NOTE: For a health hazard, exposure to the toxic substance or other hazard must cause harm to such a degree as to shorten life or be immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) or cause substantial reduction in physical or mental efficiency or health, even though the resulting harm may not manifest itself immediately.*

#### B. Pre-Inspection Procedures.

##### 1. Imminent Danger Report Received by the Field.

- a. After the Enforcement Assistant Manager or designee receives a report of imminent danger, he or she will evaluate the inspection requirements and assign an inspector to conduct the inspection.



- b. Every effort will be made to conduct the imminent danger inspection on the same day that the report is received. In any case, the inspection will be conducted no later than the day after the report is received.
- c. When an immediate inspection cannot be made, the Division Manager or designee will contact the employer immediately, obtain as many pertinent details as possible about the situation, and attempt to have any employee(s) affected by the imminent danger voluntarily removed, if necessary.
  - a. A record of what steps, if any, the employer intends to take in order to eliminate the danger will be included in the case file.
  - b. This notification is considered an advance notice of inspection to be handled in accordance with the advance notice procedures described below.

## 2. **Advance Notice.**

- a. The Administrative Rules authorizes advance notice of an inspection of potential imminent danger situations in order to encourage employers to eliminate dangerous conditions as quickly as possible. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.70]
- b. Where an immediate inspection cannot be made after the nearest IDOL office is alerted to an imminent danger condition and advance notice will speed the elimination of the hazard, the Enforcement Assistant Manager, at the direction of the Division Manager, will give notice of an impending inspection to the employer.
- c. Where advance notice of an inspection is given to an employer, it shall also be given to the authorized employee representative, if present. If the inspection is in response to a formal complaint, the complainant will be informed of the inspection unless this will cause a delay in speeding the elimination of the hazard.

## C. **Imminent Danger Inspection Procedures.**

All alleged imminent danger situations brought to the attention of or discovered by inspectors while conducting any inspection will be inspected immediately. Additional inspection activity will take place only after the imminent danger condition has been resolved.

### 1. **Scope of Inspection.**

Inspectors may consider expanding the scope of an imminent danger inspection based on additional hazards discovered or brought to their attention during the inspection.

**2. Procedures for Inspection.**

- a. Every imminent danger inspection will be conducted as expeditiously as possible.
- b. Inspectors will offer the employer and employee representatives the opportunity to participate in the worksite inspection, unless the immediacy of the hazard makes it impractical to delay the inspection in order to afford time to reach the area of the alleged imminent danger.
- c. As soon as reasonably practicable after discovery of existing conditions or practices constituting an imminent danger, the employer shall be informed of such hazards. The employer shall be asked to notify affected employees and to remove them from exposure to the imminent danger hazard. The employer should be encouraged to voluntarily take appropriate abatement measures to promptly eliminate the danger.

**D. Elimination of the Imminent Danger.**

**1. Voluntary Elimination of the Imminent Danger.**

**a. How to Voluntarily Eliminate a Hazard.**

- Voluntary elimination of the hazard has been accomplished when the employer:
  - Immediately removes affected employees from the danger area;
  - Immediately removes or abates the hazardous condition; and
  - Gives satisfactory assurance that the dangerous condition will remain abated before permitting employees to work in the area.
- Satisfactory assurance can be evidenced by:
  - After removing the affected employees, immediate corrective action is initiated,

designed to bring the dangerous condition, practice, means or method of operation, or process into compliance, which, when completed, would permanently eliminate the dangerous condition; or

- A good faith representation by the employer that permanent corrective action will be taken as soon as possible, **and** that affected employees will not be permitted to work in the area of the imminent danger until the condition is permanently corrected; or
- A good faith representation by the employer that permanent corrective action will be instituted as soon as possible. Where personal protective equipment can eliminate the imminent danger, such equipment will be issued and its use strictly enforced until the condition is permanently corrected.

*NOTE: Through on-site observations, inspectors shall ensure that any/all representations from the employer that an imminent danger has been abated are accurate.*

**b. Where a Hazard is Voluntarily Eliminated.**

If an employer voluntarily and completely eliminates the imminent danger without unreasonable delay:

- No imminent danger legal proceeding shall be instituted;
- The Notice of an Alleged Imminent Danger Form, does not need to be completed;
- An appropriate citation(s) and notice(s) of penalty will be proposed for issuance with an appropriate notation on the violation worksheet to document corrective actions; and
- Inspectors will inform the affected employees or their authorized representative(s) that, although an imminent danger had existed, danger has been eliminated. They will also be informed of any steps taken by the employer to eliminate the hazardous condition.

2. **Refusal to Eliminate an Imminent Danger.**

- a. If the employer does not or cannot voluntarily eliminate the hazard or remove affected employees from the exposure and the danger is immediate, inspectors will immediately consult with the Division Manager or designee and obtain permission to post a Notice of an Alleged Imminent Danger.
- b. The Division Manager or designees will then determine whether to consult with the Legal Division to obtain a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO).
- c. The employer will be advised that Section 2.0 of the Safety Inspection and Education Act gives circuit courts the authority to restrain any condition or practice that poses an imminent danger to employees.

*NOTE: IDOL has no authority to order the closing of a worksite or to order affected employees to leave the area of the imminent danger or the workplace.*

- d. Inspectors will notify affected employees and the employee representative that a Notice of Alleged Imminent Danger has been posted and will advise them of the Section 2.2 discrimination protections under the Safety Inspection and Education Act. Employees will be advised that they have the right to refuse to perform work in the area where the imminent danger exists.
- e. The Enforcement Assistant Manager and the Division Manager, in consultation with the Legal Division, will assess the situation and, if warranted, make arrangements for the expedited initiation of court action, or instruct the inspector to remove the posting.

3. **When Harm Will Occur Before Abatement is Required.**

- a. If inspectors have clear evidence that harm will occur before abatement is required (i.e., before a final order of the ALJ in a contested case or before a TRO can be obtained), they will confer with the Division Manager or designee to determine a course of action.

*NOTE: In some cases, the evidence may not support the finding of an imminent danger at the time of the physical inspection, but rather after further evaluation of the case file or presence of additional evidence.*

- b. As appropriate, an imminent danger notice may be posted at the time citations are delivered or even after the notice of contest is filed.

## **II. Fatality and Catastrophe Investigations.**

### **A. Definitions.**

#### **1. Fatality.**

A public employee death resulting from a work-related incident or exposure; in general, from an accident or an illness caused by or related to a workplace hazard.

#### **2. Catastrophe.**

The hospitalization of one or more employees resulting from a work-related incident or exposure; in general, from an accident or an illness caused by a workplace hazard.

#### **3. Hospitalization.**

Being admitted as an **inpatient** to a hospital or equivalent medical facility for examination, observation or treatment.

#### **4. Incident Requiring a Coordinated State Response.**

An incident involving multiple fatalities, extensive injuries, massive toxic exposures, extensive property damage, or one that presents potential employee injury and generates widespread media interest.

### **B. Initial Report.**

- 1. The Fatality/Catastrophe Report Form is a pre-inspection form that must be completed for all fatalities or catastrophes unless knowledge of the event occurs during the course of an inspection at the establishment involved. The purpose of this form is to provide IDOL with enough information to determine whether or not to investigate the event. It is also used as a research tool by OSHA and other agencies.
- 2. If, after the initial report, IDOL becomes aware of information that affects the decision to investigate, the Fatality/Catastrophe Report Form should be updated. If the additional information does not affect the decision to investigate, or the investigation has been initiated or completed, the form need not be updated. After

updating the Report Form, it should be resubmitted to the National Office.

3. See additional details on completing the Fatality/Catastrophe Report Form this chapter, *Recording and Tracking for Fatality/Catastrophe Inspections*.

**C. Investigation Procedures.**

1. All fatalities and catastrophes will be thoroughly investigated in an attempt to determine the cause of the event, whether a violation of IDOL-OSHA safety and health standards, regulations, or the general duty clause occurred, and any effect the violation had on the accident. The Division Manager will establish a procedure to ensure that each fatality or catastrophe is thoroughly investigated and processed in accordance with established policy.
2. The investigation should be initiated as soon as possible after receiving an initial report of the incident, ideally within one working day, by an appropriately trained and experienced inspector assigned by the Enforcement Assistant Manager. The Enforcement Assistant Manager determines the scope of the fatality/catastrophe investigation. All investigations must be completed in an expeditious manner.
3. Inspections following fatalities or catastrophes should include videotaping as a method of documentation and gathering evidence when appropriate. The use of photography is also encouraged in documenting and evidence gathering.
4. As in all inspections, under no circumstances should IDOL personnel conducting fatality/catastrophe investigations be unprotected against a hazard encountered during the course of an investigation. IDOL personnel must use appropriate personal protective equipment and take all necessary precautions to avoid and/or prevent occupational exposure to potential hazards that may be encountered.

**D. Interview Procedures.**

1. **Identify and Interview Persons.**
  - a. Identify and interview all persons with firsthand knowledge of the incident, including first responders, police officers, medical responders, and management, as early as possible in the investigation. The sooner a witness is interviewed, the more accurate and candid the witness statement will be.

- b. If an employee representative is actively involved in the inspection, he or she can serve as a valuable resource by assisting in identifying employees who might have information relevant to the investigation.
- c. Conduct employee interviews privately, outside the presence of the employer. Employees are not required to inform their employer that they provided a statement to IDOL.
- d. When interviewing:
  - Properly document the contact information of all parties because follow-up interviews with a witness are sometimes necessary.
  - When appropriate, reduce interviews to writing and have the witness sign the document. Transcribe video- and audio-taped interviews and have the witness sign the transcription.
  - Read the statement to the witness and attempt to obtain agreement. Note any witnesses' refusal to sign or initial his/her statement.
  - Ask the interviewee to initial any changes or corrections made to his/her statement.
  - Advise interviewee of IDOL whistleblower protections.
- e. See *Inspection Procedures*, for additional information on conducting interviews.

## 2. **Informer's Privilege.**

- a. The informer's privilege allows the government to withhold the **identity** of individuals who provide information about the violation of laws, including IDOL rules and regulations. The identity of witnesses will remain confidential to the extent possible. However, inform each witness that disclosure of his/her identity may be necessary in connection with enforcement or court actions.
- b. The informer's privilege also protects the contents of statements to the extent that disclosure would reveal the witness' identity. When the contents of a statement will not disclose the identity of the informant (i.e., statements that do not reveal the witness' job title, work area, job duties, or other information

that would tend to reveal the individual's identity), the privilege does not apply and such statements may be released.

- c. Inform each witness that his/her interview statements may be released if he or she authorizes such a release or if he or she voluntarily discloses the statement to others, resulting in a waiver of the privilege.
- d. Inform witnesses in a tactful and nonthreatening manner that making a false statement to an inspector during the course of an investigation could be a criminal offense.

**E. Investigation Documentation.**

Document all fatality and catastrophe investigations thoroughly.

**1. Personal Data – Victim.**

Potential items to be documented include: Name; Address; Email address; Telephone; Age; Sex; Nationality; Job Title; Date of Employment; Time in Position; Job being done at the time of the incident; Training for job being performed at time of the incident; Employee deceased/injured; Nature of injury – fracture, amputation, etc.; and Prognosis of injured employee.

**2. Incident Data.**

Potential items to be documented include: How and why did the incident occur; the physical layout of the worksite; sketches/drawings; measurements; video/audio/photos to identify sources, and whether the accident was work-related.

**3. Equipment or Process Involved.**

Potential items to be documented include: Equipment type; Manufacturer; Model; Manufacturer's instructions; Kind of process; Condition; Misuse; Maintenance program; Equipment inspection (logs, reports); Warning devices (detectors); Tasks performed; How often equipment is used; Energy sources and disconnecting means identified; and Supervision or instruction provided to employees involved in the accident.

**4. Witness Statements.**



Potential witnesses include: the Public; Fellow employees; Management; Emergency responders (e.g., police department, fire department); and Medical personnel (e.g., medical examiner).

**5. Safety and Health Program.**

Potential questions include: Does the employer have a safety and/or health program? Does the program address the type of hazard that resulted in the fatality/catastrophe? How are the elements of the program specifically implemented at the worksite?

**6. Multi-Employer Worksite**

Describe the contractual and in practice relationships of the employer with the other employers involved with the work being performed at the worksite, if applicable.

**7. Records Request.**

Potential records include: Disciplinary Records; Training Records; and Next of Kin information.

*NOTE: Next of kin information should be gathered as soon as possible to ensure that condolence letters can be sent in a timely manner.*

**F. Potential Criminal Penalties in Fatality and Catastrophe Cases.**

**1. Criminal Penalties.**

- a. Section 2.3 (b)(2) of the Safety Inspection and Education Act provides criminal penalties for an employer who is convicted of having willfully violated an IDOL-OSHA standard, rule or order when the violation results in the death of an employee.
- b. The circumstances surrounding all occupationally-related fatalities will be evaluated to determine whether the fatality was caused by a willful violation of a standard, thus creating the basis for a possible criminal referral. The evidence obtained during a fatality investigation is of paramount importance and must be carefully gathered and considered.
- c. Early in the investigation, the Division Manager or designee, in consultation with the inspector, should make an initial determination as to whether there is potential for a criminal violation. The decision will be based on consideration of the following:

- A fatality has occurred.
- There is evidence that an IDOL-OSHA standard has been violated and that the violation contributed to the death.
- There is reason to believe that the employer was aware of the requirements of the standard and knew it was in violation of the standard, or that the employer was plainly indifferent to employee safety.
- The Division Manager will notify the Legal Division. At the discretion of the Division Manager, the Enforcement Assistant Manager, and dependent upon procedures in place, a team or trained criminal investigator may assist in or perform portions of an investigation.
- When there is a potential criminal referral in a case, it is essential that the Division Manager involve the Legal Division in the early stages of the investigation during the evidence gathering process.

**G. Families of Victims.**

**1. Contacting Family Members.**

Family members of employees involved in fatal or catastrophic occupational accidents or illnesses may be contacted early in the investigation and given the opportunity to discuss the circumstances of the accident or illness. IDOL staff contacting family members must exercise tact and good judgment in their discussions.

**2. Information Letter.**

The standard information letter will normally be sent to the individual(s) listed as the emergency contact on the victim's employment records (if available) and/or the otherwise determined next of kin within 5 working days of determining the victim's identity and verifying the proper address where communications should be sent.

*NOTE: In some circumstances, it may not be appropriate to follow these exact procedures; i.e., in the case of a small business, the*

*owner or supervisor may be a relative of the victim. Modify the form letter to take any special circumstances into account or do not send the letter, as appropriate.*

**3. Letter to Victim's Emergency Contact.**

In addition to the standard information letter sent by the Division Manager, the Director of Labor also sends a letter to the victim's emergency contact or otherwise verifiable next of kin.

**4. Interviewing the Family.**

- a. When taking a statement from families of the victim(s), explain that the interview will be handled following the same procedures as those in effect for witness interviews. Sensitivity and professionalism are required during these interviews. Carefully evaluate the information received and attempt to corroborate it during the investigation.
- b. Maintain follow-up contact with key family members or other contact persons so that these parties can be kept up-to-date on the status of the investigation. Provide family members or their legal representatives with a copy of all citations, subsequent settlement agreements as these are issued, or as soon thereafter as possible. However, such information will only be provided to family members after it has been provided to the employer.
- c. The releasable portions of the case file will not be made available to family members until after the contest period has passed and no contest has been filed. If a contest is filed, the case file will not be made available until after the litigation is completed. Additionally, if a criminal referral is under consideration or has been made, the case file may not be released to the family. Notify the family of these policies and inform them that this is necessary so that any potential litigation is not compromised.

**H. Public Information Policy.**

IDOL's public information policy regarding response to fatalities and catastrophes is to explain IDOL's presence to the news media. It is not to issue periodic updates on the progress of the investigation. The Division Manager will notify the Public Information Officer who will normally handle response to media inquiries.

**I. Recording and Tracking for Fatality/Catastrophe Investigations.**

1. **Fatality/Catastrophe Report Form.**

The Fatality/Catastrophe Report Form is a pre-inspection form that must be completed for all fatalities and catastrophes unless knowledge of the event occurs during the course of an inspection at the establishment involved. Processing of this form shall be as follows:

- a. The Springfield IDOL Office will complete and enter into the inspection database information for all fatalities and catastrophes as soon as possible after learning of the event. As much information as is known at the time of the initial report should be provided; however, all items on the Fatality/Catastrophe Report Form need not be completed at the time of this initial report. Wherever possible, the age of the victim(s) should be provided, because this information is used for research by OSHA and other agencies.
- b. The Division Manager will fax a Fatality/Catastrophe Report Form for each event that will be investigated to the Director of Enforcement Programs (or, as appropriate, the Director of Construction) within 48 hours of receipt.
- c. If additional information relating to the event becomes available that affects the decision to investigate, the Fatality/Catastrophe Report Form is to be updated and resubmitted via fax to the National Office.
- d. In addition, the State Plan Coordinator will contact the Deputy Director of Enforcement Programs (or Construction, as appropriate) to ensure prompt notification of the National Office of major events, such as those likely to generate significant public or congressional interest.

2. **Investigation Summary Report.**

- a. The Investigation Summary Report is used to summarize the results of investigations of all events that involve fatalities, catastrophes, amputations, hospitalizations of two or more days, have generated significant publicity, and/or have resulted in significant property damage. An Investigation Summary Report must be inputted and saved as final as soon as the agency becomes aware of a workplace fatality and determines that it is within its jurisdiction, even if most of the data fields are left blank. The information on this form enables the

tracking of fatalities and summarizes circumstances surrounding the event.

- b. For fatality/catastrophe investigations, the Investigation Summary Report will be:
  - Opened at the beginning of the investigation and saved as *final*, even if most of the data fields are left blank, so that tracking of fatality/catastrophe investigations can be conducted in a close to “real time” fashion.
  - Modified as needed during the investigation to account for updated information.
  - Updated with all data fields completely and accurately completed at the conclusion of the investigation, including a thorough narrative description of the incident.
- c. The Investigation Summary Report narrative should not be a copy of the summary provided on the Fatality/Catastrophe Notification pre-inspection form. The narrative must comprehensively describe the characteristics of the worksite; the employer and its relationship with other employers, if relevant; the employee task/activity being performed; the related equipment used; and other pertinent information in enough detail to provide a third party reader of the narrative with a mental picture of the fatal incident and the factual circumstances surrounding the event.
- d. Only one Investigation Summary Report should be submitted for an event, regardless of how many inspections take place. If a subsequent event occurs during the course of an inspection, a new Investigation Summary Report for that event should be submitted.

**EXAMPLE :** A fatality occurs in employer’s facility in August. Both a safety and health inspection are initiated. One Investigation Summary Report should be filed to summarize the results of the inspections that resulted from the August fatality. However, in September, while the employer’s facility is still undergoing the inspections, a second fatality occurs. In this case, a *second* Investigation Summary Report should be submitted for the second fatality and an additional inspection should be opened.

### 3. **Immigrant Language Questionnaire (IMMLANG).**

- a. The [IMMLANG Questionnaire](#) is designed to allow the tracking of fatalities among Hispanic and immigrant employees and to assess the impact of potential language barriers and training deficiencies on fatal accidents. Information for this questionnaire should be collected as early in the investigation as possible, as the availability of immigrants for questioning later in the process is often uncertain.
  - b. The IMMLANG Questionnaire shall be completed before the conclusion of a fatality investigation. It should be completed only if “IMMLANG-Y” is indicated on the Inspection Report. The Questionnaire is not to be completed if “IMMLANG-N” is indicated on the Inspection Report.
  - c. The IMMLANG Questionnaire shall be submitted via the intranet. A copy of the completed questionnaire should be printed and placed in the case file.
4. **Related Event Code (REC).**

The Violation Worksheet provides specific supplemental information documenting hazards and violations. If any item cited is directly related to the occurrence of the fatality or catastrophe, the related event code shall be entered.

**J. Pre-Citation Review.**

1. Because cases involving a fatality may result in civil or criminal enforcement actions, the Division Manager is responsible for reviewing all fatality and catastrophe investigation case files to ensure that the case has been properly developed and documented in accordance with the procedures outlined here.
2. The Enforcement Assistant Manager is responsible for ensuring that an Investigation Summary Report is inputted for each incident.
3. Review all proposed violations and penalties.
4. The Division Manager should establish a procedure to ensure that each fatality or catastrophe is thoroughly investigated and processed in accordance with established policy.

**K. Post-Citation Procedures/Abatement Verification.**

Abatement verification procedures are outlined in the *Post-Citation Procedures and Abatement Verification* Chapter. [56 Ill Admin Code Part 350.210]

1. Due to the transient nature of many of the worksites where fatalities occur and because the worksite may be destroyed by the catastrophic event, it is frequently impossible to conduct follow-up inspections. In such cases, the Enforcement Assistant Manager should obtain abatement verification from the employer, along with an assurance that appropriate safety and health programs have been implemented to prevent the hazard(s) from recurring.
2. While site closure due to the completion of the cited project is an acceptable method of abatement, it can only be accepted as abatement without certification where an inspector directly verifies that closure; otherwise, certification by the employer is required. Follow-up inspections need not be conducted if the inspector has verified abatement during the inspection or if the employer has provided other proof of abatement.
3. Where the worksite continues to exist, IDOL will normally conduct a follow-up inspection if serious citations have been issued.
4. Include abatement language and safety and health system implementation language in any subsequent settlement agreement.
  - a. If there is a violation that requires abatement verification, the abatement verification required portion of violation worksheet must be completed with the date of abatement verified.

**L. Audit Procedures.**

The following procedures will be implemented to evaluate compliance with, and the effectiveness of, fatality/catastrophe investigation procedures:

1. A review and analysis of fatality/catastrophe files will be a part of the program audit. The review and analysis will utilize random case files to address the following:
  - a. *Inspection Findings.* Ensure that hazards have been appropriately addressed and violations have been properly classified. Also ensure that criminal referrals are made when appropriate.
  - b. *Documentation.* Ensure that the Fatality Summary narrative and the Violation Narrative data fields have been completed accurately and detailed. Ensure that the IMMLANG Questionnaire is completed, if relevant.

- c. *Construction Fatalities.* Ensure that the case file has been copied and forwarded to the University of Tennessee in accordance with the memoranda to the Regional Administrators from H. Berrien Zettler, Deputy Director, Directorate of Construction, dated September 12 and 13, 2000 (via email) and from Deputy Assistant Secretary R. Davis Layne dated May 14, 2003 and February 18, 2004.
- d. *Settlement Terms.* Ensure that settlement terms are appropriate, including violation reclassification, penalty reductions, and additional abatement language.
- e. *Abatement Verification.* Ensure that abatement verification has been obtained.
- f. Review database reports to identify any trends or cases that may indicate that a further review of those cases may be necessary.

**M. Relationship of Fatality and Catastrophe Investigations to Other Programs and Activities.**

**1. Emergency Management.**

Generally, IDOL will provide technical assistance and consultation in coordinating the protection of response worker and recovery worker safety and health. Whether IDOL will conduct a formal fatality or catastrophe investigation in such a situation will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

**2. Significant Enforcement Cases.**

- a. Significant enforcement cases are defined as inspection cases with initial proposed penalties over \$100,000. An inspection resulting from an employee fatality or a workplace catastrophe may well be a significant enforcement case and, therefore, particularly thorough documentation is necessary to sustain legal sufficiency.

**3. Special Emphasis Programs.**

If a fatality or catastrophe investigation arises with respect to an establishment that is also in the current inspection cycle to receive a programmed inspection under any Site Specific Targeting



program, the investigation and the inspection may be conducted either concurrently or separately.

4. **Cooperative Programs.** [RESERVED]

N. **Special Issues Related to Workplace Fatalities.**

1. **Death by Natural Causes.**

Workplace fatalities caused by natural causes, including heart attacks, must be reported by the employer. The Division Manager will then decide whether to investigate the incident.

2. **Workplace Violence.**

As with heart attacks, fatalities caused by incidents of workplace violence must be reported to IDOL by the employer. The Division Manager will determine whether or not the incident will be investigated.

3. **Motor Vehicle Accidents.**

- a. IDOL does require reporting motor vehicle accidents that occur on public roads or highways, including accidents that occur in construction work zones.
- b. Employers are required to keep records must record vehicle accidents in their Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses..

4. **Suicides.**

Incidents of employee-suicide in the workplace must be reported to IDOL by the employer. The Division Manager will then decide whether an investigation is warranted.

III. **Rescue Operations and Emergency Response.**

A. **IDOL's Authority to Direct Rescue Operations.**

1. **Direction of Rescue Operations.**

IDOL has no authority to direct rescue operations. These are the responsibility of the employer and/or local political subdivisions or state agencies.

2. **Monitoring and Inspecting Working Conditions of Rescue Operations.**

IDOL may monitor and inspect working conditions of covered employees engaged in rescue operations to ensure compliance with standards that protect rescuers, and to provide technical assistance where appropriate.

B. **Voluntary Rescue Operations Performed by Employees.**

IDOL recognizes that an employee may choose to place himself/herself at risk to save the life of another person. The following provides guidance on IDOL citation policy toward employers whose employees perform, or attempt to perform, rescues of individuals in life-threatening danger.

1. **Imminent Danger.**

No citation may be issued to an employer because of a rescue activity undertaken by an employee of that employer with respect to an individual in imminent danger [i.e., the existence of any condition or practice that could reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm before such condition or practice can be abated] unless:

- a. Such employee is designated or assigned by the employer to have responsibility to perform or assist in rescue operations,

AND

the employer fails to provide protection of the safety and health of such employee, including failing to provide appropriate training and rescue equipment; or

- b. Such employee is directed by the employer to perform rescue activities in the course of carrying out the employee's job duties,

AND

the employer fails to provide protection of the safety and health of such employee, including failing to provide appropriate training and rescue equipment; or

- c. Such employee is employed in a workplace that requires the employee to carry out duties that are directly related to a workplace operation where the likelihood of life-threatening accidents is foreseeable, such as operations where employees are located in confined spaces or trenches, handle hazardous waste, respond to emergency situations, perform excavations, or perform construction over water;

AND

such employee has not been designated or assigned to perform or assist in rescue operations and voluntarily elects to rescue such an individual;

AND

the employer has failed to instruct employees not designated or assigned to perform or assist in rescue operations of the arrangements for rescue, not to attempt rescue, and of the hazards of attempting rescue without adequate training or equipment.

**2. Citation for Voluntary Actions.**

If an employer has trained his or her employees, no citation will be issued for an employee's voluntary rescue actions, regardless of whether they are successful.

**C. Emergency Response.**

**3. Role in Emergency Operations.**

While it is IDOL's policy to respond as quickly as possible to significant events that may affect the health or safety of employees, the Department does not have authority to direct emergency operations.

**4. Response to Catastrophic Events .**

IDOL responds to catastrophic events promptly and acts as an active and forceful protector of employee safety and health during the response, cleanup, removal, storage, and investigation phases of these incidents, while maintaining a visible but limited role during the initial response phase.

**5. IDOL's Role.**

- a. For inspections of an ongoing emergency response or post-emergency response operation where there has been a catastrophic event, the Division Manager will determine the overall role that IDOL will play.
- b. During an emergency event, IDOL has a responsibility and authority to both enforce its regulations and provide technical advice and assistance to the on-scene coordinator.
- c. For details on IDOL's response to occupationally-related incidents involving multiple fatalities, extensive injuries, massive toxic exposures, extensive property damage, or potential employee injury that generates widespread media interest. See [CPL 02-00-094](#), *OSHA's Response to Significant Events of Potentially Catastrophic Consequences*, dated July 22, 1991.

## **Chapter 11**

### **HEALTH INSPECTION ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS**

#### **I. Health Enforcement Programs [Reserved]**

## Chapter 12

### LEGAL ISSUES

#### I. Administrative Subpoenas.

##### A. When to Issue.

An Administrative Subpoena may be issued whenever there is a need for records, documents, testimony or other supporting evidence necessary for completing an inspection or an investigation of any matter falling within IDOL's authority.

1. The Division Manager has authority to issue subpoenas.
2. The issuance of an administrative subpoena requires the Division Manager's signature.

##### B. Two Types of Subpoenas.

There are two types of subpoenas used to obtain evidence during an IDOL investigation:

1. A [Subpoena Duces Tecum](#) is used to obtain documents. It orders a person or organization to appear at a specified time and place and produce certain documents, and to testify to their authenticity. Employers are not required to create a new record in order to respond to these types of subpoenas.
2. A [Subpoena Ad Testificandum](#) commands a named individual or corporation to appear at a specified time and place, such as the nearest IDOL office, to provide testimony under oath. A verbatim transcript is made of this testimony.

##### C. Division Manager Delegated Authority to Issue Administrative Subpoenas.

Although authority to issue some types of subpoenas is reserved to the Division Manager, Enforcement Assistant Managers may be authorized to issue routine administrative subpoenas.

1. Enforcement Assistant Managers may be delegated authority to issue administrative subpoenas for any record or document relevant to an inspection or investigation under the Act(s), including:
  - a. Injury and illness records;

- b. Hazard communication program;
  - c. Lockout/tagout program; and
  - d. Safety and health program.
- 2. Information shall be requested from the employer or holder of records, documents, or other information-containing materials.
  - a. If this person/entity refuses to provide requested information or evidence, the IDOL representative serving the subpoena shall explain the reason for the request.
  - b. If there is still a refusal to produce the information or evidence requested, the IDOL representative shall inform the person/entity that the agency may take further legal action.
- 3. The official issuing the subpoena is responsible for evaluating the circumstances and deciding whether to issue a subpoena. In cases with potential state-wide implications or involving extraordinary circumstances, the Division Manager shall be contacted for concurrence or to determine whether the subpoena should be issued by the Division Manager.

**D. Division Manager Authority to Issue Administrative Subpoenas.**

- 1. Division Managers have independent authority to issue subpoenas for any appropriate purpose. The following authority shall be reserved to the Division Manager:
  - a. Issuance of a [Subpoena Ad Testificandum](#) to require the testimony of any company official, employee, or other witness;
  - b. Issuance of a subpoena for the production of personally identifiable medical records for which a medical access order has been obtained; and
  - c. Issuance of a subpoena for the production of physical evidence, such as samples of materials.
- 2. Although this authority may not routinely be delegated to Enforcement Assistant Managers, in a few cases such delegation may be appropriate.

**E. Administrative Subpoena Content and Service.**

1. Model administrative subpoenas for use by the IDOL are provided at the end of this chapter. If the Division Manager believes that there is reason for any departure from the models due to circumstances of the case, the Legal Division shall be consulted.
2. The subpoena shall be prepared for the appropriate party and will normally be served by personal service (delivery to the party named in person). Leaving a copy at a place of business or residence is not personal service.
  - a. In exceptional circumstances, service may be by certified mail with return receipt requested.
  - b. Where no individual's name is available, the subpoena can be addressed to a business' or organization's "Custodian(s) of Records."
3. Examples of language for a routine *Subpoena Duces Tecum* are provided below. This language should be expanded when requesting additional or more detailed information for accident, catastrophe, referral or fatality investigations.
  - a. "Copies of any and all documents, including information stored electronically, which reflect training procedures for the lockout/tagout procedures and hazard communication program in effect at the [insert site name] in [insert city, state], during the period [insert month/day/year], to present."
  - b. "Copies of the OSHA-300 and the OSHA-301 forms, for the entire site, during calendar years [insert year] and [insert year]."
  - c. "Copies of any and all documents, including information stored electronically, such as safety and health program handbooks, minutes of safety and health meetings, training certification records, audits and reprimands for violations of safety and health rules by employees of the [insert site name] in [insert city, state], that show [insert employer's name] had and enforced safety rules relating to the use of trench boxes during the period [insert month/day/year], to present."

*NOTE: Where particular information is being sought, a subpoena's description should be narrow and specific in order to increase the likelihood for prompt compliance with the request.*
4. A copy of the subpoena, signed by the Division Manager, shall be maintained in the inspection case file.



- a. Copies of subpoenas may be forwarded to the Legal Division as practicable.
- b. The Division Manager and Enforcement Assistant Managers shall establish procedures to track all administrative subpoenas issued. These procedures shall include instructions for completing the [return of service](#).

**F. Compliance with the Subpoena.**

The person/entity served may comply with the subpoena by making the information or evidence available to the compliance officer immediately upon service, or at the time and place specified in the subpoena.

1. With respect to any record required to be made or kept pursuant to any statute or regulation, the subpoena shall normally allow **three days** from the date of service for production of the required information although a shorter period may be appropriate.
2. With respect to other types of records or information, such as safety programs or incident reports, the subpoena shall normally allow at least **five working days** from the date of service for production of the required information.
3. Separate subpoenas for items 1 and 2 above may be necessary.

**G. Refusal to Honor Subpoena.**

1. If the person/entity served refuses to comply with (or only partially honors) the subpoena, the inspector shall document all relevant facts and advise the Division Manager before taking further action.
2. To enforce a subpoena, the Division Manager shall follow the procedures outlined for obtaining warrants, and shall refer the matter to the Legal Division for appropriate action.

**H. Anticipatory Subpoena.**

Generally, agency policy is to seek voluntary production of evidence before an administrative subpoena is issued. However, a subpoena may be executed and served without making a prior request where there is reason to believe that the corporate entity and/or person from whom information is sought will not voluntarily comply, or where there is an urgent need for the information. Anticipatory subpoenas require consultation with the Legal Division.

*NOTE: For example, pre-inspection preparation of subpoenas for issuance at the opening conference is appropriate in cases where the employer has previously denied access to records or where complex inspections, involving extensive review of records, are planned.*

## **II. Service of Subpoena on IDOL Personnel.**

### **A. Proceedings to which the Director of Labor is a Party.**

If any IDOL personnel are served with a subpoena or order either to appear or to provide testimony in, or information for, a proceeding where the Director of Labor is a party, they shall immediately contact the Legal Division for instructions regarding the manner in which to respond. If an inspector is served with a subpoena, they shall notify the Division Manager immediately who shall then refer the matter to the Legal Division.

### **B. Proceedings to which the Director of Labor is Not a Party.**

1. If any IDOL personnel is served with a subpoena or order either to appear or to provide testimony in, or information for, a proceeding to which the Director of Labor is not a party (e.g., a private third party tort suit for damages associated with a workplace injury), they shall immediately contact the Legal Division.
2. Illinois Department of Labor prohibits Department employees from participating in, or from providing information for, proceedings in which the Director of Labor is not a party without explicit permission from the designated Chief Legal Counsel. These regulations apply to demands to disclose or provide:
  - a. Any material contained in the files of the Department;
  - b. Any information relating to material contained in the files of the Department; or
  - c. Any information or material acquired by any person while such person was an employee of the Department as a part of the performance of his/her official duties or because of his/her official status.
3. The Legal Division is responsible for responding to such requests and will take appropriate steps to have the subpoena quashed or provide the necessary permission, as appropriate, to allow an employee to comply with an issued order.

### **III. Obtaining Warrants.**

#### **A. Warrant Applications.**

1. Upon refusal of entry, or if there is reason to believe an employer will refuse entry, the Division Manager shall proceed according to guidelines and procedures for warrant applications. The Division Manager may initiate the compulsory process with approval of the Legal Division.
2. Warrant applications for establishments where consent has been denied for a limited scope inspection (i.e., complaint, referral, accident investigation) shall normally be limited to the specific working conditions or practices forming the basis of the inspection. However, a broad scope warrant may be sought if there is evidence of potentially pervasive violative conditions or if the establishment is on a current list of establishments targeted for a comprehensive inspection.

#### **B. General Information Necessary to Obtain a Warrant.**

If the warrant is to be obtained by the Legal Division, the Division Manager shall inform the Legal Division in writing within **48 hours** after the determination is made and provide all information necessary to obtain a warrant, including:

1. IDOL Office, telephone number, and name of Enforcement Assistant Manager or designee involved;
2. Name of inspector attempting inspection and inspection number, if assigned. Identify whether the inspection to be conducted will include safety items, health items or both;
3. Legal name(s) of establishment and address, including City, State and County. Include site location if different from mailing address;
4. Estimated number of employees at inspection site;
5. Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) or North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code and high hazard ranking for that specific industry within the State;
6. Summary of all facts leading to the refusal of entry or limitation of inspection, including:
  - a. Date and time of entry/attempted entry;
  - b. Date and time of denial;

- c. Stage of denial (entry, opening conference, walk-around, etc.);
- 7. A narrative of all actions taken by the inspector leading up to, during, and after refusal, including:
  - a. Full name and title of the person(s) to whom inspector presented credentials;
  - b. Full name and title of person(s) who refused entry;
  - c. Reasons stated for the denial by person(s) refusing entry;
  - d. Response, if any, by the inspector to the denial name and address (if known) of any witnesses to denial of entry.
- 8. Any information related to past inspections, including copies of previous citations.
- 9. Any previous requests for warrants. Attach details, if applicable.
- 10. All completed information related to the current inspection report, including documentation of any observations of violations in plain view discovered prior to denial.
- 11. If a construction site involving work under contract from any agency of the Illinois Government, the name of the agency, the date of the contract, and the type of work involved.
- 12. Other pertinent information, such as: description of the workplace; the work processes; machinery, tools and materials used; known hazards and injuries associated with the specific manufacturing process or industry.
- 13. Investigative procedures that may be required during the proposed inspection, e.g., interviewing of employees/witnesses, personal sampling, photographs, audio/videotapes, examination of records, access to medical records, etc.

**C. Specific Warrant Information Based on Inspection Type.**

Document all specific reasons for the selection of the establishment to be inspected, including proposed scope of the inspection:

- 1. **Imminent Danger.**
  - a. Description of alleged imminent danger situation;

- b. Date information received and source of information;
- c. Original allegation and copy of typed report, including basis for reasonable expectation of death or serious physical harm and immediacy of danger; and
- d. Whether all current imminent danger investigative procedures have been followed.

2. **Fatality/Catastrophe.**

The Fatality/Catastrophe Report Form should be completed with as much detail as possible.

3. **Complaint or Referral.**

- a. Original complaint or referral and copy of typed complaint or referral;
- b. Reasons IDOL believes that a violation threatening physical harm or imminent danger exists, including possible standards that could be violated if the complaint or referral is credible and representative of workplace conditions;
- c. Whether all current complaint or referral processing procedures have been followed; and
- d. Any additional information pertaining to the evaluation of the complaint or referral.

4. **Programmed.**

- a. Targeted safety – general industry, construction;
- b. Targeted health; and/or
- c. Special emphasis program--Special Programs, Local Emphasis Program, etc.

5. **Follow-up.**

- a. Date of initial inspection;
- b. Details and reasons follow-up was conducted;
- c. Copies of previous citations which served as the basis for initiating the follow-up;

- d. Copies of settlement agreements and final orders, if applicable; and/or
- e. Previous history of failure to correct, if any.

6. **Monitoring.**

- a. Date of original inspection;
- b. Details and reasons monitoring inspection is to be conducted;
- c. Copies of previous citations and/or settlement agreements that serve as the basis for the monitoring inspection; and/or
- d. Petition for Modification of Abatement Date (PMA) request, if applicable.

D. **Warrant Procedures.**

Where a warrant has been obtained, inspectors are authorized to conduct the inspection in accordance with the terms of the warrant. All questions from employers concerning the reasonableness of a compulsory process inspection shall be referred to the Division Manager and the Legal Division.

1. **Action Taken Upon Receipt of Warrant (Compulsory Process).**

- a. The inspection will normally begin within 24 hours of receipt of a warrant or from the date authorized by the warrant for initiating the inspection.
- b. Upon completion of the inspection, if the warrant includes a return of service space for entering inspection dates, inspectors shall complete the return of service on the original warrant, sign and forward it to the Division Manager or designee for appropriate action.

2. **Serving a Subpoena for Production of Records.**

Where appropriate, even where the scope of an inspection is limited by a warrant or an employer's consent to specific conditions or practices, any subpoena for production of records shall be served in accordance with the section on administrative subpoenas in this chapter.

E. **Second Warrant.**

Under certain circumstances, a second warrant may be sought to expand an inspection based on a records review or "plain view" observations of other potential violations discovered during a limited scope walk-around.

**F. Refused Entry or Interference.**

1. When an apparent refusal to permit entry or inspection is encountered upon presenting the warrant, inspectors shall specifically inquire whether the employer is refusing to comply with the warrant.
2. If the employer refuses to comply or if consent is not clearly given, inspectors shall not attempt to conduct the inspection at that time, and shall leave the premises and contact the Division Manager or designee regarding further action.
  - a. Inspectors shall fully document all facts relevant to the refusal (including noting all witnesses to the denial of entry or interference).
  - b. The Division Manager shall then contact the Legal Division, who shall jointly decide the action to be taken.

**G. Sheriff or Local Police Assistance.**

In unusual circumstances, a local Sheriff or Police agency may be asked to accompany an inspector when a warrant is presented. A request for law enforcement assistance shall be made by the Enforcement Assistant Manager only after consultation with the Division Manager and Chief Legal Counsel, and only when there is a potential for violence, harassment and/or interference with the inspection or reason to believe that the presence of law enforcement will assist with compliance with the warrant.

**IV. Notice of Contest.**

The Administrative Law Judge is an independent Division created to decide contests of citations or penalties resulting from IDOL inspections. The ALJ, therefore, functions as an administrative court, with established procedures for conducting hearings, receiving evidence and rendering decisions. The Act(s) and the Administrative Hearings Rules state that the ALJ's operate independently to ensure that parties receive impartial hearings.

**A. Time Limit for Filing a Notice of Contest.**

1. The Safety Inspection and Education Act provides employers fifteen working days following its receipt of a notice of a citation to notify IDOL of the employer's desire to contest a citation and/or proposed assessment of penalty.

2. Where a notice of contest was not mailed, i.e., postmarked, within the 15 working day period allowed for contest, the Enforcement Assistant Manager shall follow the instructions for Late Notices of Contest. A copy of any untimely notice of contest shall be retained in the case file.

**B. Contest of Abatement Period Only.**

If the notice of contest is submitted to the Division Manager after the 15 working day period, but contests only the reasonableness of the abatement period, it shall be treated as a Petition for Modification of Abatement and handled in accordance with PMA procedures.

**C. Communication Where the Intent to Contest is Unclear.**

1. If a written communication is received from an employer containing an objection, criticism or other adverse comment as to a citation or proposed penalty, but which does not clearly appear to contest the citations, the Division Manager shall contact the employer to clarify the intent of the communication.
  - a. After receipt of the communication, any clarification should be obtained within the 15 working day contest period, so that if a determination is made that it is a notice of contest, the file may be timely forwarded to the ALJ.
  - b. In cases where written communication from an employer requesting **an informal conference that also states an intent to contest** is received, the employer must be informed that there can be no informal conference unless the notice of contest is withdrawn. If the employer still wants to pursue an informal conference, it must first present or send a letter expressing that intent and rescinding the contest. All documents pertaining to such communications shall be retained in the case file.
2. If the Division Manager determines that the employer intends the document to be a notice of contest, it shall be transmitted to the Chief ALJ. If contact with the employer reveals a desire for an informal conference, the employer shall be informed that the conference does not stay the running of the 15 working day contest period.

*NOTE: Settlement is permitted at any stage of Administrative Hearings proceedings.*

**V. Late Notice of Contest.**

**A. Failure to Notify IDOL of Intent to Contest.**



If the employer fails to notify IDOL of its intent to contest a citation or penalty within fifteen working days following the receipt of a citation, the citation and proposed penalties become final orders.

**B. Notice Received after the Contest Period.**

1. In every case where IDOL receives notice of an employer's intent to contest a citation and/or proposed assessment of penalty beyond the 15 working day period, the Division Manager shall inform employers in writing that IDOL will not accept the untimely notice of contest, but that the employer may transmit the late filed notice of contest to the Chief ALJ.
2. **The letter from the Division Manager will also indicate the following:**
  - a. Inspection number;
  - b. Citation number(s);
  - c. Corresponding proposed penalties;
  - d. Date on which IDOL believes the employer received the notice of a violation (and proposed penalty, if applicable);
  - e. Date on which IDOL received the employer's notice of contest, as well as any additional information the Division Manager believes to be pertinent.

*NOTE: The postmarked envelope containing the late filed notice of contest date is to be retained. A copy of the letter and envelope shall also be sent to the Legal Division and Chief ALJ.*

**C. Retention of Documents.**

1. All documents reflecting the date on which the employer received the notice of a violation (and proposed penalty, if applicable), and the employer's notice of contest was received, as well as any additional information pertinent to demonstrating failure to file a timely notice of contest are to be maintained in the case file.
2. Written or oral statements from the employer or its representative explaining the employer's reason for missing the filing deadline shall also be maintained (notes shall be taken to memorialize oral communications).

## **VI. Contested Case Processing Procedures.**

The notice of contest and related documents must be sent to the Chief ALJ within 15 working days of receipt of the employer's notification. The Legal Division shall be consulted in any questionable cases.

### **A. Transmittal of Notice of Contest to Hearings Division.**

#### **1. Documents to Chief ALJ.**

In most cases, the envelope sent to the Chief ALJ will contain the following documents:

- a. Employer's original letter contesting IDOL's action;
- b. One copy of the Citation and Notification of Penalty Form or of the Notice of Failure to Abate Form.

#### **2. Notices of Contest.**

The original notice of contest shall be transmitted to the Chief ALJ and a copy retained in the case file. The envelope containing the notice of contest shall be retained in the case file with the postmark intact.

#### **3. Contested Citations and Notice of Proposed Penalty or Notice of Failure to Abate.**

A signed copy of each of these documents shall be sent to the Chief ALJ and a copy retained in the case file.

## **VII. Communications while Proceedings are Pending before the Administrative Law Judge.**

### **A. Consultation with Legal Division.**

1. After a notice of contest is filed and the case is within the jurisdiction of the ALJ, there shall be no subsequent investigations of, or conferences with, the employer or employee representatives that have sought party status relating to any issues underlying the contested citations, without prior clearance from the Legal Division.
2. Once a notice of contest has been filed, all inquiries relating to the Citation and Notification of Penalty shall be referred promptly to the Legal Division. This includes inquiries from the employer, affected employees,

employee representatives, prospective witnesses, insurance carriers, other Government agencies, attorneys, and any other party.

**B. Communications with the Administrative Law Judge while Proceedings are Pending.**

Inspectors, Enforcement Assistant Managers, the Division Manager, or other field personnel shall not have any direct or indirect communication relevant to the merits of any open case with Administrative Law Judges or any of the parties or interveners. All inquiries and communications with the parties or interveners shall be handled through consultation with the Legal Division.

**VIII. Discovery Methods in Accordance with the Administrative Hearings Rules.**

Once a legal proceeding has been initiated, each party has the opportunity to “discover” evidence in the possession of an opposing party. Traditionally, discovery methods include:

- ▶ Request for Admissions,
- ▶ Interrogatories,
- ▶ Requests for Production of Documents, and
- ▶ Depositions.

An attorney from the Legal Division will represent the agency in responding to discovery requests. It is essential that all IDOL personnel coordinate and cooperate with the assigned attorney to ensure that such responses are accurate, complete, and filed in a timely manner.

**A. Interrogatories.**

Inspectors shall draft and sign answers to interrogatories, with the Legal Division assistance. It is the responsibility of the inspector to answer each interrogatory separately and fully. The Legal Division attorney shall sign any objections to the interrogatories. Inspectors should be aware that they may be deposed and/or examined at hearing on the interrogatory answers provided.

**B. Production of Documents.**

1. If a request for production of documents is served on the Legal Division and that request is forwarded to the Division Manager, inspectors, or staff members, they should immediately make all documents relevant to that discovery demand available to the Legal Division attorney.

2. While portions of those materials may be later withheld based on governmental privileges or doctrine (e.g., statements that would reveal the identity of a complainant), inspectors must not withhold any information from the Legal Division attorney.
3. It is Legal Division's responsibility to review all material and to assert any applicable privileges that may justify withholding documents/materials that would otherwise be discoverable.

**C. Depositions.**

Depositions permit an opposing party to take a potential witness' pre-hearing statement under oath in order to better understand the witness's potential testimony if the matter later proceeds to a hearing. Inspectors or other IDOL personnel may be required to offer testimony during a deposition. In such cases, a Legal Division attorney will be present with the witness.

**IX. Testifying in Hearings.**

While instructions provided by Legal Division attorneys take precedence, particularly during trial preparation, the following considerations will generally enhance the hearing testimony of inspectors:

**A. Review Documents and Evidence.**

In consultation with the Legal Division, inspectors shall review documents and evidence relevant to the inspection or investigation before the proceeding so that when testifying, they are very familiar with the evidence and need not regularly refer to the file or other documents.

**B. Attire.**

Wear appropriate clothing that reflects the agency's respect for the court or other tribunal before which you are testifying. This also applies when appearing to seek an administrative warrant.

**C. Responses to Questions.**

Answer all questions directly and honestly. If you do not understand a question, indicate that and ask that the question be repeated or clarified.

**D. Administrative Law Judge's Instruction(s).**

Listen carefully to any instruction provided by the ALJ and, unless instructed to the contrary by Legal Division counsel, follow the ALJ's instruction.

**X. Citation Final Order Dates.**

**A. Citation/Notice of Penalty Not Contested.**

The Citation/Notice of Penalty and abatement date becomes a final order **on the date the 15 working day contest period expires**. For purposes of computing the 15 working day period, the day the employer receives the citation is not counted.

**Example 15-1:** An employer receives the Citation/Notice of Penalty on Monday, August 4<sup>th</sup>. The day the employer receives the Citation/Notice of Penalty is not counted. Therefore, the final order date would be Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup>.

**B. Citation/Notice of Penalty Resolved by Informal Settlement Agreement (ISA).**

Because there is no contest of the citation, an ISA becomes final, with penalties due and payable, **on the date of the last signature of the parties**. (An ISA is effective upon signature by both the Division Manager and the employer representative as long as the contest period has not expired).

*NOTE: A later due date for payment of penalties may be set by the terms of the ISA.*

**C. Citation/Notice of Penalty Resolved by Formal Settlement Agreement (FSA).**

The Citation/Notice of Penalty becomes **final 30 days after docketing of the Administrative Law Judge's (ALJ's) Order approving the parties' stipulation and settlement agreement**, assuming there is no direction for review. The Notice of Docketing specifies the date upon which the decision becomes a final order.

## Chapter 13

### DISCLOSURE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA)

#### I. Procedure

##### A. Request received.

1. Date stamp request as the day *after* it is received.
2. Due date is five (5) working days from date stamp. Note due date on request with initials.

##### B. Input FOIA request into IDOL FOIA Log. Save Log.

##### C. Notification to the Division(s).

Notify division or divisions of request via e-mail. Request should be scanned or if received via e-mail forwarded to division.

##### D. Division Response.

Division must treat as priority and search for matching records. Division must advise:

1. No responsive records
2. Whether investigation is open or closed.
  - a. Open records are not disclosed
  - b. Closed investigations are disclosed  
Per Governor's office, closed investigations include those cases closed by IDOL but pending at Attorney General's office for legal work.
3. Count number of pages responsive to request and advise via e-mail number of pages.
  - a. First 50 pages are free.  
Any requests with over 50 pages are charged at \$.15 per page. If free, division shall copy and begin processing
  - b. If the request is over 50 pages, request is made from requestor for payment of fees prior to copying.

- c. Upon receipt of payment, copying and processing begins.

**E. Large Requests.**

If there are a large amount of records that are responsive to request:

1. IDOL must contact requestor within five (5) business days via telephone and followed by – and this is *important* – written communication (e-mail is best) to narrow the request to manageable proportions.
2. Failure to do so waives the Department’s right to assert unduly burdensome. The narrowed request must be placed in writing (again, very important).
3. If requestor refuses to narrow, deny request as unduly burdensome. A “large” number of records will change depending upon which division is responding to the FOIA, as well as how “form-like” the documents are within that Division.

**F. Redacting.**

If responsive documents contain personal information, the following information may be taken out automatically:

1. unique identifiers, including a person's social security number, driver's license number, employee identification number, biometric identifiers, personal financial information, passwords or other access codes, medical records, home or personal telephone numbers, and personal email addresses, home address and personal license plates.
2. ANY OTHER INFORMATION YOU BELIEVE IS PRIVATE, SUCH AS PERSONNEL RECORDS, BANK ACCOUNT NUMBERS, MARITAL STATUS, BIRTH DATE, please advise the Legal Department who will assist with advice as to performing this task.
3. If responsive documents contain preliminary notes or drafts (ALJ notes, investigator notes, etc.) contact the Legal Department as to performing this task.
4. If you believe another law prohibits IDOL from releasing documents, such as medical records, they may also be removed automatically.

**G. Documentation.**

Upon release of documents, update FOIA Log. If redactions are made, they must be noted on FOIA log by specific sub-section of the law. FOIA mandates this be tracked. Save changes.



## APPENDIX A

### ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Safety Inspection and Education Division

#### *Subpoena Duces Tecum*

TO : [NAME]  
[ESTABLISHMENT]  
[ADDRESS]  
[CASE FILE NUMBER]

Pursuant to Section 2(c) and 2.4(c)(6) of the Safety Inspection and Education Act [820 ILCS 220] you are hereby required to produce records in your power, possession or control to the:

SAFETY INSPECTION AND EDUCATION DIVISION  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
[ADDRESS OF LOCAL OFFICE]  
in the city of [Chicago/Springfield/Marion], Illinois [ZIP CODE]  
by [DATE AND TIME]

regarding: [DETAILED DESCRIPTION OR LISTING OF DOCUMENTS].

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#### FAIL NOT AT YOUR PERIL

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF *I have hereunto affixed my signature and the seal of the*  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR at *Springfield, Illinois*  
this [DATE].

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Division Manager  
Safety Inspection and Education Division  
Illinois Department of Labor

Signed, and sworn to, before me on [DATE].

Notary Public

## APPENDIX B

### ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Safety Inspection and Education Division

#### *Subpoena Ad Testificandum*

TO : [NAME]  
[ESTABLISHMENT]  
[ADDRESS]  
[CASE FILE NUMBER]

Pursuant to Section 2(c) and 2.4(c)(6) of the Safety Inspection and Education Act  
[820 ILCS 220] you are hereby required to appear before:

[NAME OF PERSON TAKING TESTIMONY]  
SAFETY INSPECTION AND EDUCATION DIVISION  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
[ADDRESS OF LOCAL OFFICE]  
in the city of [Chicago/Springfield/Marion], Illinois [ZIP CODE]  
by [DATE AND TIME]

to testify regarding: [DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF WORKING CONDITIONS OR ISSUE].



#### FAIL NOT AT YOUR PERIL

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF *I have hereunto affixed my  
signature and the seal of the  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR at Springfield, Illinois  
this [DATE].*

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Division Manager  
Safety Inspection and Education Division  
Illinois Department of Labor

Signed, and sworn to, before me on [DATE].

Notary Public